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Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXIV, Issue No. 29

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2014

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INSIDE

NATION



Mark Zuckerberg was the most generous philanthropist in 2013.

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The Copenhagen Zoo kills a 2-year-old giraffe to prevent inbreeding.

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LIFE & STYLE



Actor Shia LaBeouf hits the Berlin Film Festival in memorable style.

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CHC's CMS survey results out

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Gov. Eloy S. Inos and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. board chair Joaquin Torres separately confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* that the much-awaited result of the survey conducted by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on the public hospital has already been issued to the corporation, indicating a "better" outcome than previous findings.

Inos told *Saipan Tribune* that he just recently received the summary document of the CMS findings, which he said he has yet to fully examine.

"But as I understand it, there remains a number of housekeeping stuff that needs to be corrected by the hospital," he said after attending Friday's news briefing at the Northern Marianas Colleges.



» **Inos: Some 'housekeeping' issues remain to be addressed**

Inos bared that among the "concerns" raised in the new CMS report are the posting of information for the public about patient's rights, among others. He said that, despite not having "life-threatening" issues this time, "I am not going to diminish the importance of those things."

See CHC on Page 4



WATER WORKS

The USNS *Wheeler* shows off its firefighting capability by spraying jets of seawater more than 300 feet over the port and starboard sides of the offshore petroleum distribution systems vessel.

MARK RABAGO

See story on Page 6

Historic trial of Buckingham begins

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Edward T. Buckingham appeared yesterday before the Superior Court, making him the first former attorney general in CNMI history to stand trial on criminal charges.

When *Saipan Tribune* left the courtroom at 4:15pm, Gilbert Bimbrich, chief of the Office of the Attorney General's Civil Division, was still testifying for the CNMI

government.

Bimbrich was the fifth government witness that Office of the Public Auditor legal counsel George Hasselback called to the witness stand yesterday.

Bimbrich testified that he represented Buckingham at the initial hearing in the Superior Court on Aug. 6, 2012, upon the latter's instruction.

See BUCKINGHAM on Page 4



Constant visitor, 87, keeps returning to CNMI to fish

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

Even at the age of 87, Kazuo Sato keeps coming back to the CNMI, which he first visited in 1993 mainly for recreational fishing. He said that even in their twilight years, many retired Japanese continue to find solace in the CNMI's weather, waters and people for their fishing expeditions.

"I started coming here in 1993 as a tourist,

See VISITOR on Page 4

Eighty-seven-year-old Kazuo Sato, a repeat Japanese tourist to the CNMI, shows yesterday a photo of the day he caught an 80-kilo tuna 20 years ago in Anatahan waters.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Woman gets nearly 20 yrs. in prison term for sex trafficking. PAGE 4
'NMI cannot sustain another bond float for land compensation' PAGE 3



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Local

Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority special assistant Thomas J. Camacho shows reporters the proposed routes for a planned public bus system expected to kick off this year, after making a presentation at a closed-door Cabinet meeting yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Saipan-Tinian ferry feasibility study contractor this week

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Even as the “fixed” and flexible” bus system is expected to take off before the end of the year, the winning off-island bidder for the long-awaited study to determine the feasibility of a Saipan-Tinian ferry system will be known this week, Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority special assistant Thomas J. Camacho said yesterday.

Funding for this Saipan-Tinian ferry service feasibility study is \$175,000 from the Federal Highway Administration, with the CNMI Department of Public Works as the administering agency in partnership with COTA.

Camacho updated Cabinet members about the public bus transportation system, including the proposed routes on Saipan, and other transportation-related developments during a closed-door meeting yesterday morning.

Gov. Eloy S. Inos separately said yesterday that as soon as the bus system proves feasible, the program would be expanded and the routes would be increased.

After the over three-hour Cabinet meeting, Camacho also told reporters about the selection later this week of the winning bidder for the Saipan-Tinian ferry feasibility study.

He said the two entities that responded to the request for proposals are from the U.S. mainland.

“We completed the final phase of the evaluation process so this week, we’re looking at

selecting one of the two bidders for the Saipan-Tinian-Saipan ferry system feasibility study,” Camacho said.

Once picked, the contractor, he said, will have about half-year to conduct and present the study that will determine the viability or feasibility of a Saipan-Tinian ferry service.

This means before the end of 2014, the government would already know whether to pursue or not a ferry service between Saipan and Tinian, years after a privately-owned and operated ferry service shut down.

Camacho said a Guam-Rota ferry service feasibility study will be a separate one, because they are two separate jurisdictions.

If the study reveals the viability of a Saipan-Tinian ferry service, then COTA will take the recommendations and start working on the terminal and related facilities, ferry boat design and operations, which he said would become a government and private partnership. A private firm, for example, could take over the actual operations of the ferry.

Besides federal funding, the government may also implement certain taxes to help subsidize the ferry service.

“We’re hoping that the study would recommend an auto-passenger ferry so we can bring vehicles back and forth. It’s an option for people,” he added.

He said the government cannot pursue a ferry service without a feasibility study.

“A super ferry in Hawaii it flopped because there was no study really done, no impact study,” he added.

Probation sentence pushed for Ayuyu

Lawyers for former senator Juan M. Ayuyu are recommending a probation sentence and no fines for the ex-senator.

Attorney Bruce Berline, counsel for Ayuyu in the fruit bat case, stated that Ayuyu has been an outstanding member of the community for many years and served the community well as a senator until a day came when he was told by a dying member of his family that he would like to eat fruit bat again before he passes.

In Ayuyu’s sentencing memorandum, Berline asked the court to impose a sentence of probation. Citing Ayuyu’s financial circumstances, Berline also urged the court not to impose any fine.

Guam attorney David J. Lujan, counsel for the defendant in the obstruction of justice case, joined

in Berline’s memorandum.

Berline said at the time when the wish was made by the dying family member, Ayuyu was aware of the cultural significance that the fruit bat has with the Chamorro people, especially older Chamorros.

When Ayuyu attempted to bring the fruit bat from Rota to Saipan, the fruit bat was discovered, the lawyer said.

Berline said that given the nature and circumstances surrounding the misdemeanor offense, Ayuyu’s lack of any prior criminal history, his acceptance of responsibility, and his strong family support, a sentence of probation is enough.

The U.S. government is recommending the imposition of the highest end—41 months—in the sentencing range. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

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PACIFIC ISLANDS CLUB SAIPAN

'NMI cannot sustain another bond float for land compensation'

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

Gov. Eloy S. Inos does not believe the CNMI could sustain another bond flotation for land compensation, following lawmakers' suggestions as early as January to float another bond. This come even as a long-planned \$60 million to \$80 mil-

lion pension obligation bond has yet to get off the ground.

"I don't think we could sustain another bond issue for the purpose. Besides, we need a dedicated source of repayment and I'm afraid we don't have flexibility at this point. We still try to dedicate some revenue source to handle the pension obligation bond that we plan to issue," Inos

said in an interview after an over three-hour Cabinet meeting yesterday on Capital Hill.

Lawmakers' suggestion for land compensation bond comes years after the government floated \$40 million for land compensation but used only \$28.5 million of that to pay landowners in exchange for taking their property for public

access road, wetlands and ponding basins. The rest went to the construction of an adult prison in Susupe.

The governor continues to urge the Legislature to send revenue-generating bills his way for consideration as source of repayment for the pension obligation bond as well as other government obligations such as the Retirement Fund settlement agreement, restoration of the 25-percent pension cut, and government health and life insurance plan.

Rep. Ralph Yumul (Ind-Saipan), meanwhile, reiterated yesterday his opposition to House Bill 18-171, which he said could allow for the use of bond proceeds to pay for land compensation, which is not what voters and lawmakers approved

on separate occasions in the past.

HB 18-171 amends Public Law 18-12, which authorizes floating of up to \$300 million pension obligation bond. The bill provides for the issuance of bonds other than general obligation bonds, and acknowledge the existence of an actuarial determination of the unfunded liability of the government to the Retirement Fund.

The bill, however, is not expected to be acted on in today's House session, as members want to hear first from the Department of Finance later this week.

Over 300 landowners have yet to see a single penny for the government's taking of their lands years or decades ago. Other families got paid anywhere between \$100,000 and over \$4 million.

Bail for alleged HK fugitive denied

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona denied bail yesterday for alleged Hong Kong fugitive and property mogul Wei Zeng.

Zeng, however, was allowed to refile his request for bail should he meet the criteria for release.

The detention hearing set for yesterday afternoon was vacated.

In an order, Manglona said Zeng will remain in detention under the provisional arrest warrant.

The judge denied bail after the defendant, through counsels Bruce Berline and Nelson Xu, withdrew his request for bail on Friday.

Zeng, however, reserved his right to request bail at a later time should "special circumstances" arise or it becomes practicable to request bail under any other alternative basis.

Berline and Xu stated that

given the general case law of extradition, the court would generally be required to find the presence of "special circumstances" in order to obtain Zeng's release.

At this time, Berline and Xu conceded that that they are unaware of "special circumstances" that could be presented to the court in order to obtain Zeng's release.

On Thursday, a federal grand jury indicted Zeng in connection with his arrest at the Saipan International Airport last Jan. 16. The indictment charged him with use of false document and misuse of passport. Zeng arrived on Saipan from Shanghai, China, and allegedly used a different identity to try to enter Saipan.

The Hong Kong government is seeking Zeng's extradition due to a pending case against him. According to the U.S. government, the Hong Kong District Court issued a warrant for Zeng's arrest after he allegedly bribed a Hong Kong bank

official with HK \$2.3 million (\$300,000) in October 2010. The cash was allegedly a reward for the bank official's help in a multi-million Hong Kong dollar loan extension application and for giving favorable credit information relating to Zeng's two companies.

Inos lauds deferral of other CUC proposals

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Gov. Eloy S. Inos has lauded the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission's recent decision to put off making a decision on a number of proposals the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has been pushing for, describing it as a modest approach.

Inos pointed out that the public should be properly informed on how the new rate decisions will actually impact them.

CPUC approved last week CUC's petition to generate an additional \$2.8 million by increasing the electric base rates of its customers. This will most affect those ratepayers consuming more than the minimum 350 kWh per month.

Residential customers who consume 0 to 350 kWh per month will therefore not see an increase in their bills because the order also indicated that CUC is mandated to provide residential users a refund pursuant to Public Law 16-7.

"I believe CPUC has taken a more modest approach," said Inos, adding that if the commission did not defer or deny the other proposals outside the base

rate petition, the effect would probably have been detrimental to ratepayers.

CPUC tabled a number of issues and proposals for its April regulatory meeting. These include funding for the Tele-source change order No. 5 that, if granted, would allow CUC to collect from customers the funds that will be used to pay the extended contract of the independent power producer.


Also suspended until next meeting is CUC's proposal to impose a standby charge on eight large CUC customers, amounting to \$20 per kWh monthly.

The existing \$1.50 "convenience fee" is also up for either suspension or continuous collection by CPUC. Ten other non-rate fees endorsed by CUC for specific administrative and clerical services will also be decided by the commission in April.

According to Inos, all current fees at CUC are still subject to adjustments by CPUC.

The governor said that the administration, by paying government rate on its utilities, is essentially providing subsidy to CUC operations.

"The whole objective is to bring down the cost," he added.



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS

The People's Party: Rebuilding the Commonwealth

An Invitation from the People's Party

All citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands are openly invited to a gathering of friendship, partnership, fellowship and kinship by the DEMOCRATIC PARTY of the Northern Marianas-The People's Party, to its General Membership Meeting on Saturday, February 22, 2014, at Garapan Central Park, beginning at 4:00 P.M.

Highlighting the agenda for this meeting includes the election of members into the Democratic Party of the Northern Marianas' Central Executive Committee CEC. Following the official INDUCTION of Central Executive Committee CEC members, election of party officers will take place thereafter. Gracing the afternoon event are musical entertainment and performances by local bands and singers plus food and refreshment.

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- A father of 4 children and active government employee who no longer have future retirement security;
- A local US citizen unable to find employment that pays livable wages;
- A typical family member forced to choose making payment on CUC inflated power rate or risk disconnection of services;
- A land owner waiting for years and unable to receive just payment for the use of his/her property by the government;
- A Northern Marianas Descent frustrated by an administration that aided and abated in refusing to remit millions of dollars in collected lease proceeds to MPLT;
- A victim of political retribution;
- A government employee fearful of employment dislocation;
- A local business owner who is forced to shut down a lifetime family business operations due to maltreatment and indifferent government policies;
- An aging Grandma already lost hope on those tested leaders who promised BETTER TIMES but only managed to show increases in crimes;
- A potential business operator greatly discouraged by blatant "Special Treatment Policy" practices;
- Newly wed local couples looking forward to raising a family on island but was greatly disappointed to witnessed deep mistrust in government officials;
- Middle-age college degree holder who came back home to help in the development of the CNMI only to be met with impenetrable political barriers;
- A faithful voter exercising his/her duty voting for his/her representatives but was dismayed by their arrogance and lacked of empathy;
- A single mother of twin girls desperately seeking dignified relief from the constant stress of financial uncertainty;
- A proud Chamolinian who is just fed up of more than 15 years of life full of misery and despair without foreseeable hope for a descent livelihood;
- A disappointed and disenfranchised Covenant or Republican member; or
- An independent minded member of our community just wishing to be part of a dynamic and inclusive political organization, the Democratic Party of the Northern Marianas extends an embracing welcome, welcome back, and welcome home to your permanent political membership, where membership is not based on the power of your pocket-book, but rather on the strength of your commitment and dedication to make our Commonwealth a secured and proud home for all of our people.

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Woman gets nearly 20 years in prison for sex trafficking

The federal court yesterday slapped a prison sentence of 19 years and seven months against Chang Ru Meng Backman, a former karaoke operator convicted of sex trafficking.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona accepted the U.S. government's recommendation to impose a prison sentence of 235 months.

Manglona remanded Backman to the custody of the U.S. Marshal until a prison facility is designated for her.

Attorney Joaquin Torres, counsel for Backman, recom-

mended 188 months in prison, the lowest end of the sentencing guideline range.

After the hearing, Torres said his recommendation was based on the facts that occurred. "The

testimony of the victim was not consistent," he pointed out.

Torres said there was no evidence that Backman knew that a customer would force, threaten, or coerce the victim to engage in commercial sex. Torres said there was no evidence that Backman was in reckless disregard that force, threat of force, fraud, or coercion would be used against the victim by the customer.

Assistant U.S. attorney Rami S. Badawy stated that the U.S. government is pleased with the judge's sentence.

"I believe that it sends a strong message that this kind of conduct won't be tolerated here in the CNMI," Badawy said.

In his sentencing memorandum, Badawy said the evidence produced at trial revealed the

heinous nature of the offense.

Backman, according to Badawy, motivated by greed, preyed upon the special vulnerabilities of the victim, and coerced her to have sex with men night after night, month after month.

Badawy said the defendant treated the victim, a Chinese national, like a reusable commodity and sold her to customers of her club, for her own financial gain.

"Compelling a person to engage in prostitution is one of the most serious crimes in the criminal code," he added.

On June 7, 2013, the jurors found Backman guilty of one count of sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion, but acquitted her of two counts of the same charges involving two other women. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

BUCKINGHAM

From Page 1

After the hearing, he said he proceeded to the OAG's Criminal Division where he, then chief prosecutor Peter Prestley, and other government lawyers had a teleconference with Buckingham, who was at the time already off-island.

Birnbrich recalled that prior to the hearing, he had a talk with Prestley in which they went over the mechanics of representing Buckingham in the case.

At the time, Birnbrich said, he had no clear determination whether they could represent Buckingham so he went ahead with the special appearance.

He said his understanding at the time was that since Buckingham left the CNMI, he would serve as acting AG, but he was not.

Birnbrich said he could not recall why Buckingham wanted the OAG Civil Division lawyers to represent him and not the OAG's Criminal Division.

Birnbrich said that based on the statements of Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman at the hearing, he then believed that the OAG could not represent Buckingham in the criminal case.

At the Aug. 6, 2012, hearing, Wiseman said Birnbrich has no lawful authority to represent a criminal defendant.

Another government witnesses yesterday was Frieda Demapan, executive assistant to the AG. Demapan testified that Buckingham asked her to coordinate an event at then-governor Benigno R. Fitial's house in Gualo Rai on Aug. 28, 2010, for now Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho, who was then a delegate candidate.

Demapan said she was concerned that it was going to be a political event for the Covenant Party so she advised Buckingham to turn it down. She said she could not remember exactly what Buckingham's reply was.

"Buckingham is a good man. To me he was being forced. Not exactly forced but that's the way

I feel," she added.

Demapan disclosed that she also wrote a letter to Buckingham, telling him that Fitial should apologize to him for making him organize a political event.

"I don't want him [Buckingham] in trouble," she said.

Demapan admitted that she attended the Aug. 28, 2010, event that was attended by many lawyers and OAG staff, but that she left early because she felt uncomfortable, knowing at the time that Camacho was running for delegate.

Demapan said that Buckingham asked her to make the arrangement for the event after a mandatory meeting at Saipan World Resort. She said Buckingham told her that when he went to the meeting, he was assigned to host the event.

Demapan said she expressed concern that Buckingham, as an AG, was hosting a political event.

She said Buckingham gave her only \$250 for the event, but a Facebook page was inviting

the public to attend the campaign party.

She said she wondered how \$250 could feed the public.

Demapan said that after the party, she sent an email to Buckingham, in which she expressed her anger about the event.

When asked by Hasselback why she sent the email to Buckingham's personal address, Demapan said she did not want Fitial to see it, for fear that the governor would fire her.

The trial is expected to continue today, Tuesday. Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo is presiding over the bench trial.

Attorney Richard Pierce is counsel for Buckingham.

The Office of the Public Auditor filed 12 criminal charges against Buckingham in connection with an alleged violation of election laws and illegal award of a sole-source contract, among others.

Govendo dismissed four charges, including those pertaining to the contract issue.



Former attorney general Edward T. Buckingham yesterday at the Superior Court.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

VISITOR

From Page 1

mainly for fishing. Fishing is a hobby for me. I stopped only eight years ago when my wife passed away. But now I'm back again. I won't fish this time but when I come back in June this year, I will go fishing again," Sato said at yesterday's interview, through Hideo Kato, who served as translator.

Even with his small frame, Sato said he knows he can still

fish on the islands north of Saipan using a rod and reel.

"I am still excited about fishing," he added.

He keeps a memoir and a photo album of his fishing trips to the Northern Islands since 1993.

One of the sets of photos he's most proud to show during the interview at Himawari was the day he caught an 80-kilo tuna in Anatahan waters in 1994, exactly 20 years ago.

"That's my biggest catch," the retired bus and taxi driver from Tokyo said.

Sato said he wants to share his story to show how elderly Japanese continue to pursue their passion, be it recreational fishing or something else. He said his visit this time around is to escape Tokyo's snowy weather and later, to fish again.

He said he has noticed that the face of tourism, at least on Saipan, has changed. Sato said many restaurants, for example, now cater not only to Japanese tourists but also to Chinese, Korean and Russian tourists. In some restaurants, he said, he could not find a Japa-

nese menu these days.

Back in the days, Sato would come here as part of a group of tourists wanting to go fishing. He said he used to stay at Hafa Adai Beach Hotel during all his previous trips but due to the lack of available rooms this time, he stayed at the much smaller yet efficient Himawari Hotel, also in Garapan.

He said the CNMI still has a large elderly Japanese market to tap to visit the islands.

Japan continues to be the CNMI's main tourism market.

CHC

From Page 1

Saipan Tribune learned that based on the hundred-plus-page document from CMS, the Commonwealth Health Center is required to submit a response in 10 days after receipt of the report.

Sources disclosed that the corporation received the CMS report early last week and that it was first reviewed by the management.

It will be recalled that the Commonwealth Health Center was earlier cited with numerous deficiencies that threatened the facility's certification with Medicare. In rectifying these citations, a corrective action plan was developed and turned in to CMS, indicating resolution of the identified concerns.

On Sept. 9 last year, a five-member team from CMS arrived for a complete resurvey of the facility. Compared to the survey conducted in September 2012, the team did not raise any major concerns and deficiencies at the start of their weeklong inspection.

In the September 2012 survey, CHC was sanctioned with three immediate jeopardy statuses due to serious deficiencies uncovered only in the first two days of the team's inspection. All these immediate jeopardy statuses were resolved last year.

CHCC board chair Torres said he has not received a copy of the results yet but he was assured by the corporation management that there's nothing serious that he must be worried about.

"I was assured by the management that there are no serious findings this time. The concerns raised on the latest report, I was told, have already been corrected, if not in the process of being corrected," Torres said yesterday.

Torres described the latest CMS report as "better than the previous" outcome handed to the hospital. If the governor can describe the concerns as more

of housekeeping stuff, Torres believes the citations in the new report are "minor issues" that would soon be addressed by the corporation.

He disclosed that among the "issues" raised and is in the process of completion is the HVAC project, or the heat, ventilation and air-conditioning system at CHC. The Inos administration has assured \$5 million for this project, to be sourced from untapped CIP monies. Design and bidding are now in the works.

There was also a concern about some medical equipment, it was bared.

When asked what's next for CHC, Torres emphasized the need to sustain the progress and improvements at the public hospital.

"Our goal is always to serve beyond the minimum standards. We want to 'raise the bar' so we could continuously provide quality healthcare to our people," he said.

Torres said that CHC's Condition of Participation with CMS remains and that the public hospital would continue to receive Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements from the federal agency.

CHC receives about \$22 million a year in reimbursements from Medicaid and Medicare. Without the certification for continued Condition of Participation, CHC stands to lose this huge federal assistance.

Decision

Inos disclosed to Saipan Tribune that the permanent appointment of Esther Muña to the CEO position will primarily hinge on the result of the CMS survey.

"I am going to closely look at the CMS report and make my own judgment as to whether they are substantive or not. And then I will make the decision on that issue," Inos told Saipan Tribune.

Muña has been the CEO in an interim capacity since March last year after the termination of former CEO Juan N. Babauta.

CUC's Fletcher says legislative resolution 'not factually accurate'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Alan W. Fletcher told lawmakers that much of the information in a House joint resolution requesting Gov. Eloy S. Inos to relieve him of his duties over claims of "poor record of performance" is "not factually accurate," and appear to "inappropriately criticize" him and CUC for complying with CNMI and federal laws and Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission's orders.

Fletcher responded to specific provisions in House Joint Resolution 18-15, including the claim that CUC "has made it a habit to operate without transparency."

"CUC does operate in an open and transparent manner and is subject to the same scrutiny as all government agencies and political subdivisions. All of the rate proceedings are public, and management has never failed to attend legislative and committee hearings as requested," Fletcher said in a Feb. 7 letter to House Speaker Joseph DeLeon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan) and Senate President Ralph Torres (R-Saipan).

Fletcher said many of the allegations relate to actions that occurred before he became CUC executive director, and "lack substance, fact and reasonableness."

"More concerning, it appears these allegations were not fully examined prior to the publication of the resolution," he said.

The resolution claims that the CNMI people "cannot afford the progress at CUC," to which Fletcher said any operational efficiency that the corporation has gained so far has served to lessen the existing gap between rates and costs.

What this means, he said, is that any efficiency CUC

gains in the future will not automatically lower rates. Instead, it will help CUC reach cost recovery without future increases.

Fletcher talked about CUC pursuing new energy sources. CUC currently has two requests for proposals—one for geothermal exploration, and one for integrated resource planning focusing on developing new energy sources for the CNMI.

"The Legislature, both as individual legislators and as the collective voice of the people, has a duty to investigate facts before making public statements or passing resolutions which include information which is demonstrably false," Fletcher said in his eight-page letter, copies of which were distributed to lawmakers.

HJR 18-15, authored by vice speaker Frank Dela Cruz (Ind-Saipan), was referred to the Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications Committee for review and recommendation. Dela Cruz said yesterday he has yet to fully read Fletcher's letter.

PUTC Committee chair Lorenzo DeLeon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan) said they will thoroughly review the resolution and would call in CUC officials if needed.

Gov. Eloy S. Inos, when sought for comment on Friday, told reporters that if the absence of extreme power outages, for example, reflects on Fletcher's performance, then "how can that be negative?"

Fletcher asked lawmakers to "look at the facts" he's providing them in his letter, and make their own determinations.

On the resolution's claim that "CUC has repeatedly requested and received rate increases which have resulted in CUC being enriched to the point where CUC is benefiting to the detriment [of] the CNMI's suffering people,"

Fletcher said CUC management has a legal and fiduciary responsibility to operate the utility, to recover the costs of operations, and to ensure compliance with CNMI and federal law.

He pointed out that without adequate operating funds, the stability of power, water and wastewater systems will erode.

"While recently we have been successful in providing services, the continued unavailability of funds to allow reinvestment into the utility will increase the chances of again experiencing system failures," he said.

Fletcher also said most of the CUC decisions mentioned in the resolutions were made

prior to him becoming CUC executive director, including purchase of vehicles and 15-year contract extension for Telesource.

As to the resolution's claim that CUC failed to terminate an employee convicted and found guilty in a court of law for theft of service, Fletcher said the subject employee was not charged by the Office of the Attorney General after an investigation.

The resolution also includes claims of nepotism, which Fletcher said is "false" and "unsubstantiated."

Fletcher said he and CUC strive for continued successes and to overcome the numerous

challenges CUC faces, with customers first and foremost in their minds.

"Following power generation collapse of 2008-2009, together with the requirements of the federal stipulated order, CUC has been working diligently to overhaul the utility by stabilizing finances, replacing dilapidated equipment, and installing new infrastructure. CUC's customers have seen the successful results of these efforts in more reliable power, water and wastewater services," he added.

But unfortunately, he said, improvements come with a price tag both in operations and capital funding.

Federal agencies, he added, have been instrumental in providing a significant portion of

the funding needed to revitalize CUC. Since 2010, federal agencies have provided CUC over \$60 million in grant funding for engine repairs and efficiency-related improvements, rehabilitated wastewater treatment plants, and improved drinking water systems.

"Without these grant funds and successful projects, there would be even more pressure on our ratepayers," he added.

Fletcher was first hired at CUC in February 2011 as deputy executive director and administrator of the water and wastewater division. He had been at CUC's helm in an acting capacity since May 2012. Inos later selected Fletcher to serve as CUC executive director, after also passing federal scrutiny.



Fletcher

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Military training on Farallon de Medinilla

The U.S. military will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla during the following dates and times:

- Feb. 10, from 3:30pm to 10:30pm
- Feb. 11, from 11:30am to 12:30pm and from 4:30pm to 5:30pm
- Feb. 12 and 13, from 8am to 10:30pm
- Feb. 15, from 8am to 7pm

The general public especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. (PR)

Refaluwasch community meeting

The Carolinian Affairs Office will be hosting a community meeting for the public on Feb. 11, at the Carolinian Utt, starting at 5:30pm. Calling the Refaluwasch community and all interested individuals to attend this meeting. Bring your concerns and family matters. (PR)

MINA to hold special general membership meeting

The Mariana Islands Nature Alliance will hold a special general membership meeting on Feb. 13, 2014, at 5:30pm at the MINA conference room, Gualo Rai Center, Suite 103. The purpose for the meeting is to discuss and vote on the recommended merger between the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance and Pacific Marine Resource Institute. Projected meeting time is 30 minutes. (MINA)

Rotarians tour preposition ships

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The commodore of the Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron Three, Capt. Len Remias, finally made good on his promise to give members of the Rotary Club of Saipan a tour of some of his ships yesterday at the Saipan Lagoon.

Remias and 15 Rotary members led by president Laila Y. Boyer couldn't have picked a better day to come aboard the preposition ships. Aside from the perfect weather, which created little to no waves, the trip had an added bonus, as the USNS *Wheeler* just happens to be on Saipan.

A one-of-a-kind vessel, the *Wheeler* is an offshore petroleum distribution systems, which pumps either fuel or water up to eight miles from ship to shore when facilities ashore are unavailable.

Wheeler Capt. John Mansfield said his ship comes handy equally in wartime situations and for humanitarian aid.

"We haven't used it to pump fuel yet. It doesn't need a deep draft harbor. Aside from humanitarian aid, we can in less than 48 hours deploy our amphibious LARCS (Lighter Amphibious Resupply Cargo) into the beach to bring water."

After a tour of the unique U.S. Air Force ship, Rotarians got an added treat when Man-

sfield had his staff demonstrate the *Wheeler's* firefighting capability by blasting seawater up to 300 feet from its powerful hoses and moving it around in a spectacular fountain-like display.

Remias and the Rotarians then headed to MPS 3's flagship, the USNS *Bobo*, which like its sister ships the *Dahl*, *Lummus*, *Pililaau*, *Sacagawea*, and *Williams* carry equipment and supplies to support a Marine Expeditionary Brigade of 15,000 troops up to 30 days.

Inside the ship's cavernous interior, the wide-eyed visitors got a glimpse of the war materiel stored aboard, including bridge-laying tanks, amphibious assault vehicles, military earthmovers, and troop carriers.

Rotarians also got to sample MPS 3's much-talked about mess hall, with a tasty lunch that consisted of grilled ribeye steak and creamy shrimp scampi.

Before going back ashore, the Rotarians cruised past the USNS *Soderman*. The U.S. Army ship, like its sister ships *Charlton* and *Red Cloud*, has a cargo carrying capacity of over 300,000 square feet, allowing U.S. troops to be self-sustained in a crisis.

Boyer thanked Remias for giving the Rotarians a "wonderful experience" visiting the ships of the MPS 3.

"I was so glad were able to connect with the staff and officers of the MPS 3. We made this

a partnership with our Las Vegas Night and our other community events. We're so glad that we're able to see what they do and the work that they do. We really appreciate this opportunity."

The commodore, for his part, said he was glad to accommodate their request and was, in a way, just making good on a promise.

"I'm just following up on my promise since September to be able to invite Rotary Club since we established a relationship with the community. We participated in various events—the Las Vegas Night, the Trunk or Treat. So this is our way of showing you what we do and to just inform you all on what it is exactly we're doing here since we've been here since 1986."

Former Rotary president Pete Schilling said it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit the ships.

"It was a terrific opportunity to meet the crew and actually see how big and powerful these boats are. We got to see a side of Saipan we don't normally see. I get seasick so often I don't get out of here. It's amazing to see Saipan from out here. The boats are amazing. The crew is amazing. I'm just very impressed with their seamanship. The engine room, you don't see a spot of oil or a spot of rust anywhere. You could eat off the engines. You can fry an egg on the engine really. Everything is abso-

lutely spotless."

Community services director Tom Thornborough was equally impressed. "It's a whole different world out here. Words can't describe. It was a big treat, especially the lunch. It was really awesome. Now we know that the grey ships are the Army's equipment and the black and white are for Marines. We were on the *Bobo* so we saw the Ma-

rines' equipment. It was pretty neat; we saw the bridge tank. My house was never that clean. Everywhere we went, not a speck of dirt. You can eat off the floors. The lunch (ribeye steak) was the cherry on top!"

Incoming president Richard Cody thanked Remias for the opportunity to tour the vessels under his command.

"The commodore seems to

be different from previous commodores because he embraces the community and work with the community. I'm hopeful that following commodores will continue that relationship with the community and the Rotary Club."

Cody added that seeing the ships up close also gave him a sense of comfort, knowing that Saipan and its residents are protected.



MARK RABAGO

Rotary Club of Saipan members, led by president Laila Y. Boyer, and Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron Three, Capt. Len Remias, pose underneath one of the USNS *Wheeler's* two amphibious LARCS (Lighter Amphibious Resupply Cargo) during a tour of the squadron's ships yesterday.

Nominations being accepted for 2014 Businesswoman of the Year

HAGÁTÑA, Guam—First Hawaiian Bank and *Guam Business Magazine* are seeking nominations for the 9th annual Businesswoman of the Year *Maga'Haga* award. Nominees must be residents of Guam or the Northern Mariana Islands.

Nominees should meet the following criteria: a businesswoman who has made a significant difference in her industry through her organization or her business, a woman who has contributed to her community, a woman who is a leading representative of her profession or field, a woman who displays the best qualities of one in business.

The deadline for nominations is Feb. 28. The winner will be announced at the Businesswoman of the Year Gala on April 26.

The Gala is also a fundraiser for the Businesswoman of the Year scholarship program. The scholarships, open to both full-time and part-time college students, are intended to promote higher education by providing financial assistance to college students pursuing professional careers in business or a related field who are enrolled at the University of Guam, Guam Community College, or Northern Marianas College.

The 2013 Businesswoman of the Year *Maga'Haga* award recipient was F. Marie Calvo-Monge, chief operating officer and executive producer of Pacific Telestations Inc., which operates the stations of KUAM. Past recipients include Mary P. Rhodes, president of the Guam

Hotel & Restaurant Association and president of MARQ Consulting Services; Joyce Quinata Crisostomo, executive director of Cars Plus and president of Payless Car Rental; Anna Wang Kao, founder and president of Genghis Khan Furniture Co.; and Lorraine S. Okada, executive manager of Carlsmith Ball LLP and president and owner of Managing Consulting Services.

For more information or to submit a nomination, contact Jacqueline Guzman, assistant editor, *Guam Business Magazine* at (671) 649-0883 Ext. 125 or assist_editor@glimpsesofguam.com or Lou Sanchez, sales and marketing manager, First Hawaiian Bank at (671) 475-7853 or lsanchez@fhhb.com. (PR)



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NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2014

THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS PAID FOR BY NMHC WITH CPD FUNDS.

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of an estimated \$1,109,520.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving an estimated amount of \$753,815.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); \$309,400.00 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME); and, \$46,306.00 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2014.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of person. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert to buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention and rapid re-housing activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

Applications for the use of CPD funds are available for pick up at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located in Garapan, Saipan; San Jose Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota, beginning December 30, 2013.

Applications must be submitted to the NMHC Offices in Garapan, Saipan (Saipan Residents); San Jose, Tinian (Tinian Residents); and, Songsong Village, Rota (Rota Residents) by Friday, March 21, 2014, no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications submitted after March 21, 2014, will not be accepted.

A briefing will be conducted for interested applicants and for those applicants who have picked up an application for the use of CPD funds. The briefing will address the program requirements and regulations concerning the usage of CPD funds.

The schedules for briefing are as follows: February 12, 2014, 5:00 p.m. & February 26, 2014, 5:00 p.m.

We are encouraging all non-profit, for profit, and government service providers who are providing services to people with disabilities, homeless individuals, and emergency shelter administrators and operators to attend this briefing.

For residents living on the island of Saipan, the briefing will held at the NMHC Office in Garapan; Residents living on the island of Tinian, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in San Jose Village; and Residents living on the island of Rota, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in Songsong Village.

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the briefing are available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries, concerning the CPD program, may be directed to Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Mr. Jacob Muna, Planning Assistant at 234-6866 or 234-7689.

/s/Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

Govt: Aetna will be health insurance provider for 2014

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Inos administration has selected Aetna Global as the government’s official health insurance policy provider for active employees and retirees for the entire year.

NMI Fund administrator Lillian Pangelinan, who handles the government’s Group Health and Life Insurance Program, disclosed this Friday, saying the decision was reached after intensive negotiations with the insurance carrier.

Aetna Global was initially selected to provide the health insurance coverage of government employees and retirees of the CNMI for just 60 days, or until the end this month. This new policy carried a 40-percent increase in premiums for members. The CNMI government pays a 50 percent share of the health insurance policy of members; the other half is paid by Fund members.

On Friday, Pangelinan for-

mally informed Fund members that Aetna Global has been chosen with finality to provide the services continuously until Dec. 31, 2014. It is expected that the policy offered during the two-month extension will remain in effect in the next 12-month period.

“Thank you for your patience during these trying times with the government sponsored insurance program. Due to the cancellation of the RFP [request for proposals] for health insurance, intensive negotiations with Aetna were undertaken to ensure continued coverage to our enrollees, most especially those receiving treatment at home and abroad,” according to Pangelinan.

Under the current health policy with Aetna, the amount of new deductibles include \$300 for single, \$600 for couple, and \$900 for family category.

The Inos administration earlier said the original Aetna contract was extended to give the Executive Branch some

time to find another insurance provider that would be in the best interest of the members and the government.

Fund records show that there are approximately 2,400 individuals who benefit from the health coverage plan.

Pangelinan disclosed that Aetna representatives will soon be holding a public educational forum on the 2014 health coverage policy at the governor’s conference room beginning at

8am, simultaneously broadcast to Tinian and Rota at NMC instructional sites. The specific date for this forum will be announced soon.

Pangelinan said the enrollment period for the new policy will be on Feb. 12 to March 14. She encouraged Fund members to enroll in this program.

For members who may have questions about the policy and enrolment procedure, Aetna representatives will directly re-

spond to them at the upcoming forum, Pangelinan said.

She encouraged Fund members to visit the agency’s website to obtain enrolment forms that will also be made available at the forum.

The Group Health Life Insurance Program is benefit program of the government that is administered by the Retirement Fund administrator. For many years, Aetna International has been servicing the members’ health insurance and its contract expired on Dec. 31.

Last week, the government

also made a decision to ink a new contract for the Fund members’ life insurance coverage, selecting anew Individual Assurance Company as the policy provider for 2014.

Beginning Feb. 1, the new life insurance policy includes the following rates: For government employees, payment is \$.58 per \$1,000 of basic life benefits payable biweekly at 1.8 times annual salary. For retirees, payment is \$.63 per \$1,000 of basic life benefits payable semi-monthly at 1.8 times reduced annual pension.

34 kids avail of SDA Clinic’s ‘Give Kids A Smile’

Fifteen-year-old France Marco C. Muna stood in line as early as 5pm, together with his mother, Marilou M. Canilao, to avail of the SDA Dental Clinic’s 6th annual Give Kids A Smile on Feb. 7, 2014.

In all, a total of 34 children were given free dental care, including dental exams, extractions, fillings, and fluoride treatment, according to SDA Clinic’s registered dental hygienist Lori Serna.

Serna said the annual event is so popular that some of the children’s families would begin queuing up as early as 5am to make sure that they are the first in line. The clinic usually opens at 8am.

Various clinic staff volunteered for the event. SDA Clinic orthodontist Dr. Warren Creed was among the staff that took care of Muña, the first child one to get in. While waiting to receive dental care, SDA accountant Lovely Lopez educated the children and their parents about taking care of their teeth.

SDA Clinic director Dr. Kenneth D. Pierson said the Give Kids A Smile is a national initiative that started a number of years ago in the U.S. mainland and is promoted by the American Dental Association. The event tries to get dentists across the nation to provide free treatment to children who don’t have

access to dental care.

“That is something we totally support and that’s in line with our mission,” Pierson said, adding that they plan to do this again next year. Pierson started the event on Saipan back in February of 2009.

Serna told *Saipan Tribune* that one thing she would like to do is to invite all clinics—not just dental clinics—to help the community by giving away toothbrushes or making oral hygiene presentations and even volunteering.

It’s the message that SDA Clinic tries to reach to the community, in which they “need to educate policymakers and

parents that good oral health goes hand in hand with overall health,” and ultimately the money spent on prevention saves a lot more money in the future on dental treatment.

The Give Kids A Smile event is an annual centerpiece of February, which is National Children’s Dental Health Month and is observed every year on the first Friday of February. It focuses on providing oral health education to all children despite their economic status. Give Kids A Smile was designed to provide education, preventative and restorative care to low-income children who do not have access to care. (*Jayson Camacho*)

Agulto congratulates NMC

Rep. Antonio R. Agulto (Ind-Saipan) prefiled House Resolution 18-55 yesterday to congratulate and recognize the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents, NMC president Dr. Sharon Hart, staff, faculty, and students for the successful reaffirmation of the school’s accreditation.

The Accrediting Commission on Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges reaffirmed NMC’s accreditation on Feb. 7, 2014, exactly a year after the commission placed the college on show-cause in February 2013.

“Despite other difficult chal-

lenges the NMC was facing, the staff, faculty, students, administrators, and members of the Board of Regents pulled together and worked tirelessly to fully address accreditation standards, eligibility requirements and recommendations,” Agulto’s resolution states.

“Reaffirmation of the college’s accreditation means that NMC can continue to play a central role in helping residents of the Commonwealth advance toward their educational and professional goals and can expand its role in serving as the engine to drive the economic growth of the Commonwealth,” Agulto’s resolution adds. (*Jayson Camacho*)

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Allen I. Palacios,) FCD-DI
Petitioner,) CIVIL ACTION
) NO. 13-0625
Vs.)
Carmelita T. Palacios,)
Respondent.)
) **SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION**

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 502739 Saipan MP, 96950 as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at P.O. Box 500307 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

DATED, this 26th day of December, 2013:

/s/ Clerk of Court

Cabrera, Vicente V. Medina B.
P.O. Box 7224 SVRB
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No.: (670) 287-8364/ 287-7729

Pro se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In The Matter Of) CASE NO.
The Adoption Of:) 14-0055
D. V. C. M. (10/12/2008),)
) **NOTICE OF HEARING**
Minor Child)
By:)
Vicente V. Cabrera and)
Medina B. Cabrera)
) Petitioner(s)

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on March 17, 2014, at 1:30 p.m. in Courtroom 205A, before the Honorable Judge Govendo.

Dated this 3rd day of February, 2014

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7859 • Fax: (670) 234-5749
Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

MARIANAS PUBLIC)
LAND TRUST,) CIVIL ACTION
Plaintiff,) NO. 11-0104
vs.)
VICENTE P. CASTRO and)
DOLORES C. PANGELINAN,)
and) **AMENDED SUMMONS**
PREPEDIGNA KILELEMAN,)
BERNARD KILELEMAN and,)
TYRONE KILELEMAN,)
Successors in Interest,)
Defendants.)

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANTS
VICENTE P. CASTRO and
DOLORES C. PANGELINAN:
YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED AND NOTIFIED to file any answer you wish to make to the COMPLAINT within twenty (20) days after service of this AMENDED SUMMONS upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to Robert Tenorio Torres, Attorney at Law, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950, or as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Court of the above-entitled Court filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Office of the Clerk of Court, CNMI Superior Court, 1st Floor, Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice, P.O. Box 500307, Saipan, MP 96950-0307. It may be prepared and signed for you by your attorney and sent to the Clerk of Court by messenger or by mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this AMENDED SUMMONS, judgment by default pursuant to the court rules of the above-entitled Court may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint for Foreclosure.

SO ORDERED on this 30th day of January 2014.

/s/ Clerk of Court

Name: Carmelito S. Santos
Address: P.O. Box 503576 CK
Saipan MP 96950
Phone: (670) 788-9440

Pro se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Carmelito Sebastian Santos) FCD-DI
Petitioner) CIVIL ACTION
vs.) NO. 13-0169
Erinda Cruz-Santos)
Respondent,) **SUMMONS**

TO: Respondent, Erinda Cruz-Santos

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within twenty (20) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to Petitioner, Carmelito S. Santos whose address is P.O. Box 503576, Saipan MP, 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 9th day of April, 2013.

/s/ Clerk of Court

Saipan Tribune, Inc. is inviting individuals to apply for the following positions:

Reporter
Associates degree in Journalism, Creative Writing, English, or any related course; At least 3 years work related experience; Above-average writing skills and a competent grasp of grammar and syntax; With rigorous standards for accuracy and detail; Ability to work within deadlines and in a stressful environment; Knowledgeable in all types of writing, including news and features; With photography skills.

Applications can be obtained and submitted at Saipan Tribune, Inc. Human Resources Office located on the 2nd Floor, JP Center Building at Beach Road, Garapan. Salaries will commensurate with qualifications and experience. To be considered, applications must be submitted no later than 5:00pm, Friday, February 21, 2014.

Saipan Tribune, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Qualified women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

(2) Housekeeping Cleaner
Responsible for cleaning and tidying in the hotel bedrooms. Do domestic required including changing and replenishing the bathroom. Check the general condition of the room and notify the housekeeping supervisor of any malfunction or damage. Responsible for the linen and equipment supplied for his/her use ensuring that brand standard and procedures are applied. Clean hallways, lobbies, lounge, restrooms, corridors, elevators and stairways as assigned. Clean rugs, carpets, upholstered furniture and draperies using vacuum cleaner and shampooers. Dust and polish furniture and equipment.
Qualification Requirement: High School graduate or equivalent. 6 months to 1 year prior cleaning experience in a large building such as hotel or hospital is highly preferred. Must be able to lift and carry up to 30 pounds without any assistance. Attention to detail working carefully within the minimum time is essential. Must have good stamina and can stand on feet throughout work duty. Can work a flexible schedule including back-to-back, weekends, nights and holidays.

(2) Laundry Worker
Responsible for keeping linens in pristine condition such as towels, wash cloths and sheets. Also responsible for laundry and dry cleaning services to hotel guests.
Qualification Requirement: High School graduate or equivalent. 6 months to 1 year work experience as a laundry worker is preferred. Must be able to lift and push up to 30 pounds without any assistance. Must be able to stand on feet for long periods of time. Must be able to work flexible schedule including weekends, nights and holidays.

(2) Waiter/Waitress
Take orders from customers and in-house guests at Resort's restaurant outlets. Serve food and beverage to patrons at tables. Check with customers to ensure that they are enjoying their meals and take appropriate action to correct any problems. Clear tables or counters after patrons have finished dining.
Qualification Requirement: High School graduate or equivalent. 3 to 6 months work experience as wait staff is preferred. Must have strong customer service skills. Must be able to work flexible schedule including week-ends, nights and holidays.

Application forms may be obtained from Fiesta Resort & Spa's security office located in the South Wing. Please submit your applications to our security office by the dead-line February 14, 2014 to be considered.

Performers dazzle in Chinese group's Lunar New Year party

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Food was overflowing, more than 100 children received their *hong bao*, and performers were dazzling during the Chinese Association of Saipan's party welcoming the Year of the Horse last Saturday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

While guests dined on all-time Chinese favorites such as steamed fish and fried noodles, entertainment was provided by a gamut of performers that enthralled the crowd with their showmanship.

Students of the Chinese Education Center were regal and graceful with their performance of Chinese traditional dances, while students of tai chi master Kevin Wang wowed everyone with their expertise in the martial arts.

Lovely dancers Guo Xuan and Yang Yang also performed belly dancing and Mongolian dance. Not to be outdone, the Rose Dance School also sa-shayed on the stage with their Zumba and Samba routines.

Acclaimed singer Liu Yang and Tracy Tian were also well received by the audience, especially the former's rendition of *My Heart of China*, which Chinese association director Rose Chan said is a popular Chinese folk song.

But hands down the performance that moved everyone to their feet was that of professional violin player Melody Li. A very accomplished violinist from mainland China who

honed her skills in Europe, Li captivated everyone with the magical tunes coming from her stringed instrument.

Chan said over 300 ethnic Chinese and other guests attended the grand occasion at the

spacious Hibiscus Hall of the Garapan landmark.

VIP guests included Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman and association directors Johnny Fong of Coca-Cola Beverage Co. Micronesia and

Ta Bun Kuy of Micro Beach Hotel and Dollar Days.

While 95 percent of guests are long-term Saipan residents hailing from mainland China, Chan said a number in the crowd are Chinese who hail from other

countries like Hong Kong, Malaysia, Taiwan, and the Philippines. Chan herself is from the former British Crown Colony.

Chan also read a message from former Chinese Association of Saipan president Tan Siu

Lin and his son, Jerry, who is the group's current president.

She said the two wished everyone in attendance "Kung Hei Fat Choy" and hopes 2014 or the Year of the Wooden Horse brings everyone more success.



MARK RABAGO

The hosts of the Chinese Association of Saipan's party welcoming the Year of the Horse are on stage at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan last Saturday.



Professional violin player Melody Li captivated everyone with the magical tunes coming from her stringed instrument.



From left, Chan Po Cin, Xu Xue Mei, Jack Phan, and Minda Phan are all smiles while attending the Chinese New Year party.



Students of tai chi master Kevin Wang wowed everyone with their expertise in the martial arts.



Association directors Johnny Fong of Coca-Cola Beverage Co. Micronesia, left, and Ta Bun Kuy of Micro Beach Hotel and Dollar Days, third from left, pose for a photo with Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman and Ta's wife Annette and youngest daughter.



Students of the Chinese Education Center were regal and graceful with their performance of Chinese traditional dances.



Rose Dance School acknowledges the crowd after their performance.



Rose and Carol Chan and Annette Ta pose with other members of the association alongside lovely performers Guo Xuan and Yang Yang.

Yonsei Academy holds concert to raise funds for Haiyan victims

Some 48 students of the Yonsei Academy came together at the Pacific Islands Club's Charley's Cabaret on Sunday to play beautiful music and raise funds for the victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

The performances were stylistically arranged into the different periods of music history, such as the Baroque Period, the Classical Period, Popular Music & Hymns, Romantic Period, and Nationalism and Modernity.

Brian Youn kicked off the program with the high-stepping *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1* by Sir Edward Elgar, who is famous for his orchestral works. Other composers whose works were also highlighted at the concert were Johann Sebastian Bach, Johann Pachelbel, Antonio Vivaldi, and Ludwig van Beethoven.

The Manta Band Trombone Ensemble, composed of Sarah A Young Kim and Da Hyun Hyun, also gave a special stage performance.

The last performance was held as a senior stage for Lica Ishida performing Franz Liszt's *La Campanella*. She got a gold medal in 2013 at the Tumon Bay Music Festival in Guam and plays the flute with the



A student of Yonsei Academy performs during Sunday evening's concert at the Pacific Islands Club's Charley's Cabaret.

JAYSON CAMACHO

Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Band.

One of the student performers was Cloency Zuriel Chua, 16, who played the *Prelude op. 23 No. 5* by Sergei Rachmaninov. His father, Celso Chua, said his

son became interested in music when the first Harry Potter movie came out. He said his son, who was then only 6 years old, kept playing the movie's intro on the piano. That's when

he knew that Cloency wanted to play music.

His son started taking music lessons from their Korean neighbors. A pianist at Mount Carmel High School then tu-

tored him. Soon he moved to Yonsei Academy and came under the tutelage of teacher Young Mi Han.

Han said that Yonsei Academy is meant to "educate stu-

dents with musical senses and help them express the beautiful musical world."

"I hope I can take my students abroad for music solo competitions in America and Europe. It is important for students to have backgrounds therefore I want to help them with music," Han added.

She said they decided to hold the concert "not only for the academy and my students but also for the typhoon victims in [the] Philippines." That was the whole reason for the concert: "Helping other people through music."

Han graduated from Gyeongsang National University with a bachelor's degree in music education. She taught music for 13 years as a high school music teacher in Korea.

In 2002, Young came to Saipan and opened Yonsei Academy and established the Saipan Junior Choir. She then left for New Zealand and came back to Saipan in 2008, where she reopened and became the director of the Manta String Ensemble in 2009, when they became overall winners at the Tumon Bay Music Festival in Guam. (Jason Camacho)

Guam spends \$128M on Pacific island migrants

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)—Guam spent \$128 million on education, health care and other services for people from the Pacific island nations of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau during the last fiscal year.

The federal government reimbursed the island for about \$16 million of that total, the *Pacific Daily News* reported.

Many migrants contribute to the island community, said Madeline Bordallo, Guam's delegate to the U.S. Congress. At the same time, providing social services is also financially difficult, she said.

Citizens of the three nations may live and work in the United States under the Compact of Free Association. The 1986 pact grants the U.S. the right to use defense sites in the countries in exchange for financial assistance and migration rights.

Guam spent \$47 million on education for migrants last year. More than 7,000 students from the countries attend Guam public schools, accounting for 23 percent of enrollment.

Health, welfare and housing costs amounted to \$61 million.

About 24,000 people from Compact of Free Association nations live in Guam. The territory's overall population numbered about 160,000 in the 2010 census.

The financial data are included in a 2013 Compact Impact Report released Tuesday by the Guam's Bureau of Statistics and Plans. Guam issues the report to recover the costs of hosting migrants.

The federal government reimburses Guam and states like Hawaii for costs associated with providing government services to citizens of the island nations.

But the U.S. Interior Department hasn't provided any guidance on how to measure the true costs. Bordallo has urged the department to develop this metric.

Bordallo has said the governments of the countries should inform and educate potential migrants about the difficulties of relocation and the need to have a stable job and living situation before they arrive in Guam.

United donates PDN to Palau college

In partnership with Palau Community College, United Airlines has agreed to donate a copy of the *Pacific Daily News* to the archives of the Tan Siu Lin PCC Library collection. Upon the request of PCC president Dr. Patrick U. Tellei, United Airlines – Palau manager Clare Moses consented to providing a copy of the newspaper in order to continue delivering much needed information about the Pacific region to the Palauan community. In return, PCC will designate a section of the Tan Siu Lin PCC Library for the *Pacific Daily News*. The PDN Section of the library will be named after United Airlines. Palau Community College and the Palauan community would like to thank United Airlines for its generous contribution! (PCC)

Sabino to perform in Little Miss Pusong Pinoy

The grand prize winner of the 2013 CNMI Got Talent competition will be one of the guest performers in this Sunday's 2014 Little Miss Pusong Pinoy at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

Bernice Shane Sabino, whose soaring rendition of *O Holy Night* bested 11 other performances in the talent competition sponsored by Bridge Capital LLC in December, will be singing a couple of songs with her brother Gio during the Valentine's Day event.

Sabino's win in the talent search last Dec. 14 was her second in a competition in 2013, as she also ran away with the 2013 Little Miss Philippines title earlier in the year.

The 2014 Little Miss Pusong Pinoy, meanwhile, is Gio Sabino's first-ever public performance.

Also expected to perform are Jiro and Jea Montenejo, who will be dancing.

Like Sabino, the Montene-



MARK RABAGO

Bernice Shane Sabino, the grand prize winner of the 2013 CNMI Got Talent, will perform at this Sunday's 2014 Little Miss Pusong Pinoy at the Saipan World Resort.

jos are students of the Saipan Music & Dance Studio along Middle Road in Garapan.

United Filipino Organization president Annamae Adaza said that all is set for the 2014 Little

Miss Pusong Pinoy, sponsored by Docomo Pacific and LBC Mabuhay this Sunday.

She said the 20 candidates vying for the competition have been practicing earnestly at the

Saipan Music & Dance Studio as the days prior to the pageant winds down.

The 2013 Little Miss Pusong Pinoy candidates will compete for eight special awards: Miss Photogenic, Miss Friendship, Darling of the Crowd, Star of the Night, LBC's Best in Smile, Docomo's Spirit Award, Best in Talent, and Best in Evening Gown.

The grand prize winner will receive \$800; first runner-up, \$500; second runner-up, \$300; third runner-up, \$100; and fourth runner-up, \$100. Non-winners will be presented with consolation cash prizes, certificates of participation, and gift packs from Natasha Service Center.

For more information on the 2014 Little Miss Pusong Pinoy, call Adaza at 483-5237, Mario Mayuga at 285-1021, event director Ernie Molina at 789-8212, or Ester Sablan at 789-5553. (Mark Rabago)

GVB: 2013 fourth best year for tourism in Guam

GUAM (Pacific News Center)—The year 2013 ranks as the 4th highest year ever for visitor arrivals on Guam.

According to the latest report from the Guam Visitor's Bureau, Guam welcomed 1,334,497 visitors last year, 26,462 more than in 2012. That is a 2-percent increase.

It was the best year for visitor arrivals since 1997. Only 1995, '96 and '97 had better arrival numbers.

Although Japanese arrivals continued to decline in December, the number of Korean tourists continue to grow, along with the number of Chinese and Russian visitors.

Commenting on the arrival number, Gov. Eddie Calvo is quoted in a release as saying: "Our tourism industry is stronger and more diverse than ever before. This means more jobs are being created, and more

economic opportunities are on the horizon. Guam is doing well because of our committed private sector, friendly tourism workers, and a responsible government. All of our collective efforts have made last year better than the year before—and we're just getting started."

These increases happened despite the global decline on Japanese tourism, and that's because for the first time, Guam's tour-

ism profile is diversifying.

Additionally, the monthly visitor arrivals for December 2013 show another increase over last year. Guam welcomed 118,588 visitors in December 2013, a 0.7-percent increase when compared to December 2012. Arrivals for Korea increased by 34.4 percent, the People's Republic of China rose 25.6 percent, and the Russia Federation grew by 100.1 percent.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXIV, Issue No. 29Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
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EDITORIAL

Syria's horrific war on its own children

For some children in Syria, the civil war is a particular kind of hell. The details of a United Nations report released last week are chilling and gut-wrenching, and go far beyond the kind of civilian slaughter that accompanies shelling of residential neighborhoods—a reproachable hallmark of the fighting in that country. Despite encountering significant hurdles in reaching witnesses, U.N. investigators documented cases in which children as young as 11 were subjected to sexual attacks, their fingernails being pulled, electric shocks to genitalia and beatings. Some of the torture was aimed at forcing information out of adult relatives; in one instance, a man reported that his wife and three children were shot dead in front of him.

Many initial news stories on the U.N.'s findings seemed to split responsibility for the atrocities between the government forces and the rebels. Opposition atrocities should be cataloged too, but the report clearly puts the preponderance of blame on the army, intelligence forces and pro-government militias. Finding and holding accountable those responsible for these acts, which the report says occurred “in contravention of international law,” will be no easy task.

Complicating the situation are the delicate diplomatic maneuvers underway to try to bring about a cease-fire in a war that has cost an estimated 130,000 lives and that threatens to spread beyond Syria's boundaries. Arguments have been made that President Bashar Assad must be tried for war crimes over his forces' use of chemical weapons, but any attempt to bring him to justice will probably have to await the conclusion of negotiations to end the violence and find a political solution. Ending the war is the immediate priority.

As a practical matter, too, it's unclear whether the International Criminal Court will ever see a case against Assad. Because Syria is not a signatory to the court, it would take a referral from the U.N. Security Council to prosecute him. That isn't likely to happen as long as Russia, which has a veto on the council, continues to support Assad. Yet Russia's support might not extend to lower-level officials in his government.

Still, atrocities against children in their homes, on the streets and in detention centers are being committed by individuals and, presumably, ordered by commanders. The U.N. is doing the right thing in amassing and preserving what evidence it can now, and should take whatever additional steps it can to seek justice. There may never be an accounting in court, but the world owes it to the victims to try. And, at the very least, to bear witness.

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Aloha Medical Mission

I had meant to be a medical practitioner had I not changed career directions due to various forces, not the least of which was my low threshold for shattered bones and muscles with gushing blood flows. I began holding hands with female nurses while contemplating entry into medical school until it became habitual, so I curtailed the proclivity “for the integrity of the profession.”

My youngest sister became a nurse and married a dentist; my immediate younger brother married a nurse who often double-shifted in her nursing employment in Hawaii. All four are involved in the upcoming medical, surgical, and dental mission of the Aloha Medical Mission on Feb. 10 to 14 in Tuguegarao, Cagayan, Philippines led by Dr. Lisa Grininger of Hawaii.

My brother organized and recruited this one. There is the added incentive of having resided in Tuguegarao as a member of a Methodist clergy family in the '60s. A retired pastor, he presently chaplains Honolulu's finest in the line of uniformed blue, among many of the roles he plays. He recruited this AMM, though this is not his first; he organized this one while his nurse wife handled the preliminary logistics. An active Rotarian and community leader, he is a low-key volunteer sans the usual flair and flourish of the egomaniac but he gets the job done.

AMM's outside of Hawaii are typically 10-15 days in length, including travel time. A lot of the volunteers originating from the Philippines are visiting home, too, or have relatives living there. They will visit relations prior to or after the five-day 8-hour per day work, before returning to Hawaii. Volunteers attend to their own costs!

I am not particular in promoting the volunteer work of AMM (in the past, their work on reconstructive cleft lip and palate surgery was often criticized as simply cosmetic, a critique I do not share) as I encourage universal engagement in the whole arena of social service volunteer work. Civilization focused on the commercial aspect of medical service as a means to accumulate wealth (of well-paid surgeons and GPs) when originally the intent of profits was to ensure continuity of service. With the refusal of Americans to develop a system of universal health care on grounds of abrogating individuals' options to choose, the rationale is increasingly appearing less to do with freedom as it is a protest of professionals who benefit from incongruous medical costs and fees. AMM shows the more human side of the profession.

Living in China, the glamour of volunteers showed itself to be appealing in the Beijing 2008 Olympics followed by Shanghai 2010 Expo. The traditions of the March of the Volunteers and the young Lei Feng in China came alive again. OK, we are not all familiar with the history of post-1912 China so let me peg the March and Lei Feng in history.

The March of the Volunteers is a poem by Tian Han in 1934

By JAIME VERGARA

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com.



extolling those who fought against the expansive Japanese, those who choose noble death rather than ignoble breath. It was put into music in 1935 and was adopted as the revolutionary anthem in 1949. The author of the lyrics fell into disfavor during the Cultural Revolution so the anthem was shelved, though not discarded. In 1969, the PRC started playing it again, with some modifications in lyric in 1978. Finally the Tian Han original was restored in '82. In 2004, it was officially made the national anthem of the nation. It is called *Qilai*, “Arise” for those curious. The image of the nation propelled forward by volunteers is not the common view of China's revolution.

The other image-making target of a volunteer was a young man named Lei Feng. An orphan who joined the Communist youth corps and then the transportation unit of the PLA at 20, he is not your normal image of a hero who reached extraordinary heights of passion and died in the heat of battle. In fact, Lei Feng died at 21 directing a backing vehicle while a truck struck a telephone pole that hit him in the head. You could not get more anti-heroic than that. But Lei Feng is hailed for his selflessness and altruism, not for the heroism of a feat, but for the graciousness of a strangely warmed heart revealed in a journal he kept. And you thought the Chinese revolution was anti-religious!

The mythology surrounding Lei Feng is criticized for becoming a personality cult promoting Mao. Anyone familiar with Sinosphere tradition, it extols the personae of a leader, not because it is cultic in the religious sense, but because the honor bestowed on any of its living elders, and the dead, particularly of ancestors, is of paramount virtue.

In the last decade, China increasingly engaged its corps of volunteers!

Now back to the Aloha from Hula land. The volunteers of AMM are commended for their efforts. Cleft lip and palate surgery are critical for children's self-image. The evidence written of its value is voluminous.

For one who considers Tuguegarao as his last hometown in the Philippines, I shall symbiotically attend to the Aloha Medical Mission this month. And we mean that beyond just writing this article.

Sensuran Kandidatu

Gi tiempon Trust Territory Government, mana` guaha ayu i mafanana`an C-schedule na sensura (test). Kon-todu i umadmiministra i sensura ti magana `nai siha mismu chumule`.

Debi tana` guaha pronto sensura para todus gumuiguife man-kandidaton politika. Debi u fitme patte “academic competency” para un` masede kumandidatu. Sin este, maulegña kase ta pechiñg latangantan nababue ya ta tulus hit para i lanchu. Benefisiosu para i pinegsai yan hita mismu.

Sumen presisu lokue` na ta tuñgu` haf` na eskalera `nai mangaige para u fan kandidatu gi mafanana`an “reading comprehension”. Yangin menus ke 80 pot sientu, kase dinancheña `an ta katsa hit na dos tumalaya gi taftaf oga`an `sino taloane. Mañochu i familia yan guaha dididi` chesata kelaguen para ta lumus ñaihon chinatsaga-ta.

Estague` na tiempu `nai sinifa` i tanu` hai`las mina` sumen pre-sisu na i man-ma`gasta man-siña yan listu umakude che`chu` lina-hyan dimas de u fan lalaulauya hulu` yan papa` sin presisu. Haf` `ste na matchan un` bachet ni umesgagaihon pumalu man-bachet guatu gi Banzai Cliff. De dios na insuttu gi publiku!

Antau na inadahe

Mauleg ta pañgun todus na debi deste pa`gu mona u guaha mas inadahe gi disposision asuntun linahyan siha. Sosobra diskuidu gi chatdisposision asuntun publiku deste alacha.

Para u felis este na karera, obligasion botadot pumega kualidat na kandidatu ni man-ma-eduka yan kumomprende dichu asuntun linahyan deste primet ha`ane `nai manman-hula`. Mampos bula asuntun “dibina dibina kau doku` i atdau gi sanhaya?”

Tatnai in` repara na sumen na`magof gi halom mattiru `an gua-ha kahulu` ya ilegña, “Dispensayu`, lache ta hananague. Estague` mage i dinanche na chalan”. Estague` ta nesessita pa`gu pot para tana` fan lachog nuebu siha na biñga` niyeti gi halom hatdin publiku.

Mauleg tanae` i man-siña yan fotmat na kabayerus ya siha u

kinatga mandatun pubiku na biahe. Manyayas i los prohimus na esta ni para u fanalag hilu` man-ñgaha hokog mames.

Tailaye na bisium gastu

Haf` na puru pa`gu gastun salape sin rinikohen kontribusion tax ku-lan mohon todou felis? Na ti magahet na mas ke mediu biyon pesus i dibin gobietnu pa`gu? Ñgai`an `nai para umana` para i tailaye na bisium gastun fondou ni ti marikokohe kontiempu?

I kantidan dibin gobietnu parehu yan chetnot dinalag. Uttimoña ni mona ni tatte ya ayu hohoñga i manadan “ai, ai, ai”. Yangin cha`ot gastun salape` ni tai pisu para u kenibre haf` na para in` fan sige ha` mañochu dibatde? Kau in` nanañga para in` asecura na kontodu i publiku u famadese ni gastun ambeteria? Dios mihu!

Chetnot man-estane

Guaha siha tautau-ta man-makondena ni kotte pot ma-estanen minot na idat famaguon famalao`an. Guaha esta namatman sa` solu malañgu titanosña i prohimu `nai siña hu komprende malabidaña. Huñgan ma-kehaye, ma-arresta, ma-kotte, dispues makodena i prohimu pot tailaye na bidaña, un` petmanente na paladañg gi hinasson i prohima añghet.

Lau haf` mohon motibu na ha chogue i malabidaña. Kau ha kom-prende i asuntu? Kau ti malañgu hinasson ennau na prohimu na ha chogue i masusede? Huñgan siña ha` man-satisfechu hit sa` ma-presu. Na tiha mirese mohon ma-eksamina kau enfin malañgu hi-nassoña? Petsonatmente, chetnot mina` masusede i malabidaña sa` yangin kabales hinassoña, pues siña ha lagnosgue` ginen ennau na malabida antes de u susede. Na`mase` yangin ni guiya tiha tuñgu` na malañgu-gue`.

Dispues de ha komple mapresu, guaha garentiha na ti u chogue mismu che`chu` aminasu kontra otu minot na idat patgon palao`an? Poresu na debi amariseta i prohimu. Che`chu` kilisyanu i para ta ayuda i prohimu puede u felis hinanauña dispues. Dañkulu na ayu-du ha nesessita. Nahoñg na minamahlau gi familiaña mismu.

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.

Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.



Lugat Ilun Kada Tautau

Deste ke mañgomprendeyu`, todou ilun tautau gaige gi hilu` apaga` kada unu. Todou manalag meme`na, ni unu hulie` mana` talag tatte. Haf` taiguine este deste tutuhon?

Manae` atadogmu, tumalag meme`na, para un` lie` manu un` ha-nanague. Gi mismu tiempu, manae` hau lokue titanosmu para un` fan hassu. Yangin ni unu gi dos unna` setbe, pues adahe sa` siñaha` linimutan ilumu. Lastima todou offresimienton ayudu sa` ni unabes `nai unna` setbe ilumu.

Ke lau haf` na chinatsaga guaha na sen ti ma-usa ilun niha i man-sabiun hegsu` I Deni` para uma-ataha dididi` i didog na mattirun familia? Makat na biahe ya kase umafagcha` este na diskuidu yan tiempon estrakadan politika. Kuantu mohon na kandidatu para u atrebi siha muñañgas i mismu dinage? Dios tiampare, ihu!

Atkilon 99 Años gi fina` initiative

Ma-apprueba fina` initiative `nai para uma-ekstende atkilon tanu` ginen i presente na areglu esta 99 años na tiempu. Lamayot patte gi diniskuten este na prinipone pot para umasede mas man-inbiette—investment—guine. Malimitte este gi tautau tanu` solu. Na ti atkilon tanu` bisnis ginen hiyuñg? I benefisiu lamayot patte gaige g i man-atkikila tanu` ti i dueñu.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Where’s our interest payments?

Active DB members, do you ask or wonder about the interest on your refunds? It’s been three months and *si* Governor Inos has not paid us the interest. I wonder why? You know what is weird about all this is, first, they told us that Judge Govendo put aside \$100 million for us and they said that is our money set aside for us to retire on. Then as the Fund started collapsing, they told us there is not enough money for us to retire and no more withdrawals. Then when Richard Villagomez (former Fund administrator) spilled the beans about the overpayment of some retirees, they started drafting laws to allow us to withdraw. When we agreed to withdraw, the Fund’s board members decided to file for bankruptcy without notifying all members. I wonder if they did that on purpose to cover their mistakes and corrupted system that is now holding our investment hostage? Then finally, they came into an agreement to refund and hold the interest to pay the attorney first. Why? Is this constitutional? Are we responsible for their problems? We didn’t get our fair share to retire, plus they make us wait for almost a year before they returned our contributions and now *si* governor is telling us that there is no money yet for us. We work for so many years, why hasn’t he done anything yet?

What’s more questionable is this credit union, which loaned money from the Fund but is also in serious debt to its members. Now our leaders are going to help it pay the refunds of its members first and ignore their obligation under Public Law 17-82. A loaning business that got bankrupt for the third time and no investigation done is seriously questionable. Don’t you think the management needs to be audited first? How come they are going to help them pay the credit union members the refunds first and ignore their obligation under PL 18-72 that is way past due?

How much longer...

I have been a resident of Saipan for almost nine years now, and after my retirement as a commercial pilot five years ago made my home here. I love the island and its people and have assumed a moderate lifestyle that is now being threatened by the ridiculous power rates charged by the CUC. However it is not totally their fault.

When the largest consumer of power here ignores its obligation to pay its power bill, the only way to keep the lights on so to speak is to charge all those who do pay their power bills a higher rate to make up for the deadbeats who ignore theirs. I am referring to the CNMI government, who as of the last time I was told owed CUC tens of millions of back and current power bills.

What is going on here? Don’t they understand how many of the people of Saipan suffer with the high utility costs? Have they ever kept track of how many small businesses here have had to give up due to the same situation? My big question is: “Why are the people

Does this mean that *si* governor agreed to give away the interest to pay the attorneys first and agree to pay us the interest even if he doesn’t have any guaranteed money to pay us? Aside from taking our money and using it without our consent, why did the governor do that?

According to Judge Gatewood, the government is obligated to pay us the interest. Why is the governor ignoring this law? Does this mean that as a governor he can do whatever he pleases? We need to know what’s going on and why he is saying that there is no money to pay us yet. If there is no money, then how come they have money for the corrupted credit union, that we all know is questionable, whether the government is responsible to pay the members’ refund or not. Don’t they need to be investigated?

Not updating us with the status of our interest is another neglect of duty as a governor who put our retirement in jeopardy and killed the active members’ retirement. And since he agreed to pay the lawyers who hold our interest money without asking us again, then I believe it’s only fair that he give us an update of our interest status. I hope he is not waiting for election time again to make empty promises. He better do it now, so we can add this as one of the reason why we should vote for them again.

It is sad enough that majority of the Fund’s members are suffering because they are not capable of voicing out their rights and their concerns like Betty Johnson, who knows her way around to use the retirees. Many members were afraid of losing their contributions so they agreed to the refund, and many retirees didn’t opt out because of the threat that they will not get their retirement check anymore if they opt out.

You know, you’re not the one who made the retirement broke.

not up in arms over this situation?”

I was told a long time ago that if the CNMI government were to start paying its power bills in a timely manner, all the rest of the users’ bills would drop by as much as 40 percent. I have not been able to confirm this, but it stands to reason if they would pay their fair share it would do a lot to help the situation. But to do nothing and place the burden on the backs of all the rest of us should be considered criminal. We don’t pay, we get cut off!

I think its high time for all who live, work, and have businesses here to DEMAND that this situation be taken care of. Elections are coming up again, and it’s a great time to hold these deadbeats feet to the fire and demand relief.

Andy Nehring

Susupe, Saipan

It’s this people handling your retirement. And now that it came to this disaster, I don’t know why they are allowing those who are responsible for this destruction to get away with it? If they are really honest about justice, then why did they allow such problem to grow and burden them with so many responsibilities? Won’t it be less of a problem if they let those responsible pay for their lawyer? We the majority should be provided with an attorney. But, like I said, they hold everything from us. That made us defenseless in providing evidence to prove them wrong and unjust.

Active members, help me voice out and support my demand for the interest to be paid in accordance with the law. Last October, I shed a bucket of tears when they forced active members to sign the waiver, but receiving only what we contributed is more painful and a relief that at least we got our money back.

I hope I’m not the only one out here awaiting for the update of when the governor is going to pay active members their interest. I wonder what kind of law is out there to help us with this issue? I mean our elected officials are breaking the law that they made.

You know, if you don’t pay the power, they cut. When you don’t pay tax, you get penalty. But when the government owes us, they get away with it. I mean what kind of justice is this?

I know how much interest the government owes me, but how much altogether do they owe active members? This I want to know plus how and when are they planning to pay us.

Winnie Atalig

San Jose Village, Tinian

Cure worse than disease

An educated man like Mr. Ambrose Bennett should avoid being reviled by the people in our small community as a popinjay and a visionary fool for his views on marijuana, suggesting that the plant is only an herb and a non-addictive substance. It makes the uneducated few wonder how such an educated man represents the learning institutions where he said he acquired all his knowledge of what is good for humanity. Keep talking Ambrose, there is much more to learn about things that you have not made good sense so far. And, we should contrast your thoughts on this issue with public knowledge opposing your view that marijuana is good as an herb and a smoking substance filled with THC. The controversy fascinates the mind when the cure is worse than the disease.






Francisco R. Agulto

Kannat Tabla, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				
Mostly sunny. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲86 ▼76
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲84 ▼75
Yap	Mostly Sunny	▲87 ▼76
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	▲85 ▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲84 ▼79
Kosrae	Showers	▲84 ▼79
Majuro	Showers	▲86 ▼81

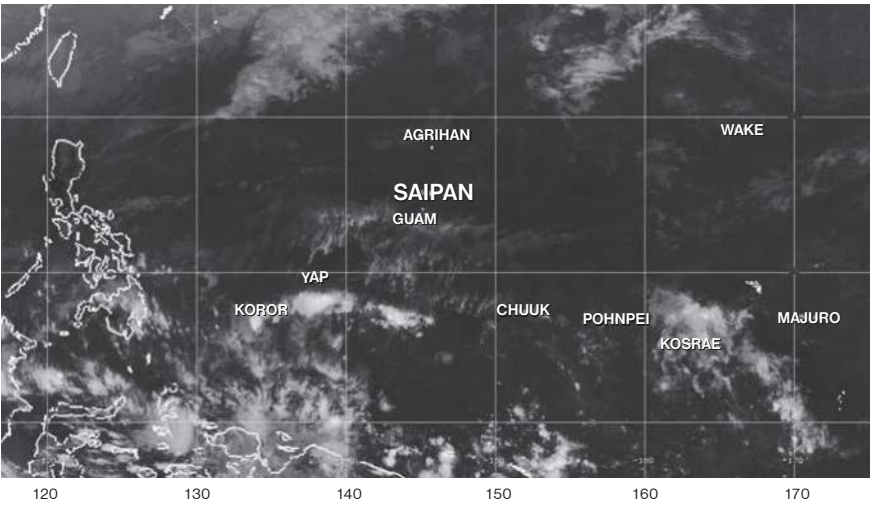
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲72 ▼64
Beijing	Sunny	▲32 ▼12
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲56 ▼51
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲82 ▼69
London	Rain	▲43 ▼38
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲71 ▼50
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	▲85 ▼74
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲84 ▼59
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲82 ▼65
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲29 ▼14
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲43 ▼34
Paris	Showers	▲46 ▼34
Pusan	Windy	▲46 ▼34
Rome	Rain	▲56 ▼43
Salem	Showers	▲47 ▼42
San Francisco	Showers	▲61 ▼49
Seoul	Sunny	▲39 ▼23
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲42 ▼33
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲36 ▼21

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
6:45 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
11:52 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
4:51 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2014
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak low pressure area is centered near 24N130E. Convergence east of the low is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms west of Iwo To island within 130 miles of a line from 21N130E to 25N136E. A cold front curves southwestward from 25N153E to 22N150E then continues as a shear line to end west of the northern CNMI near 18N142E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms exist with the front over Minami Tori Shima north of a line from 21N151E to 21N156E to 25N160E. Cloudiness and patchy rain are found northwest of the Marianas along and up to 140 miles northwest of the shear line. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms from Koror to southeast of Yap within 60 miles of a line from 7N133E to 8N140E to 7N145E and south of 2N from 130E to 140E. A surface trough extends southeastward over Kosrae from 7N161E to 1N167E. Scattered showers are located east of Pohnpei and over portions of Kosrae state within 160 miles of a line from 8N160 to EQ171E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:43 AM	6:19 PM
Wednesday	6:43 AM	6:20 PM
Thursday	6:43 AM	6:20 PM
Friday	6:42 AM	6:20 PM
Saturday	6:42 AM	6:21 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:19 PM	3:38 AM
Wednesday	4:08 PM	4:23 AM
Thursday	4:56 PM	5:07 AM
Friday	5:45 PM	5:48 AM
Saturday	6:33 PM	6:28 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
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 - Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 25, 2014

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) UA5070 4:15am 5:05am Daily UA5068 8:40am 9:30am Daily UA5039 1:35pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota UA5038 2:20pm 3:10pm 2, 3, 6 UA5078 6:05pm 6:55pm Daily UA5072 9:50pm 10:40pm Daily	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN UA5069 2:45am 3:35am Daily UA5071 7:15am 8:05am Daily UA5039 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 UA5038 12:10pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6 via Rota UA5077 4:45pm 5:35pm Daily UA5079 8:30pm 9:20pm Daily
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP) UA5039 1:35pm 2:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) UA5038 12:10pm 12:45pm 2, 3, 6
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) UA5039 2:40pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN UA5038 1:15pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL297 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:55pm 1:30am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:10am 6:20am 1, 4, 5, 7	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 1:50am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ102 2:20am 5:50am 3 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ6063 3:30am 7:20am 4, 7 (will increase eff Jan 29) OZ104 2:00pm 5:30pm 6 OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN OZ101 8:30am 2:00pm 3 OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ103 7:30pm 1:00am+1 6 OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 OZ6053 9:10pm 2:30am+1 3, 6 (will increase eff Jan 29)
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK) MU764 4:00am 8:00am 1, 5	BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN MU763 7:20pm 3:00am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5070/191 4:15am 9:05am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/473 6:00am 10:55pm Daily via NRT UA5068/PR111 8:40am 4:45pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM UA5039/183 1:35pm 9:30pm 5 via Guam UA5039/183 1:35pm 9:50pm 1, 4, 7 via Guam UA5038/183 2:20pm 9:30pm 2 via GUM OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN UA5078/183 6:05pm 9:50pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN OZ704/603 12:10am 2:20pm Daily PR110/UA5072 7:35am 5:35pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM DL172/288 7:45am 1:30am+1 Daily via NRT UA190/5077 9:55am 5:35pm 2, 7 via Guam UA190/5079 10:00am 5:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA184/5071 10:55pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM UA184/5071 11:59pm 8:05am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 11:50am 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 11:50am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5068/179 8:40am 10:35pm 1, 5 via GUM UA5038/179 2:20pm 10:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ604/749 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ746/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ724/605 1:50pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA180/5071 11:10pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
SAIPAN-TIANJIN (TSN) D2884 10:45am 2:45pm Jan 25, 30, Feb 4, 9, 14, 24	TIANJIN (TSN)-SAIPAN D2885 4:45pm 12:20am+1 Jan 25, 30, Feb 4, 9, 14, 24
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH) D2880 4:30pm 8:00pm Jan 28, Feb 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27	HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN D2881 10:00pm 5:15am+1 Jan 28, Feb 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27
SAIPAN-WUHAN (WUH) D2882 11:00am 3:15pm Jan 27, Feb 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26	WUHAN (WUH)-SAIPAN D2883 5:15pm 12:20am+1 Jan 27, Feb 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air; SYL: Yakutia Air; D: Dynamic Airways.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 100	17:50	18:20	Daily				
Saipan-Rota				Tinian-Saipan			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
				FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

MVA aids four Japan media FAM tours in January



First Impressions media team were on Saipan for a FAM(iliarization)tour in January 2014. Clockwise from top left are manager Kazumasa Egawa, photographer Takuya Nogawa, producer Chiaki Nagumo, make-up artist Emi Koike, and model Maki Mori.

The Marianas Visitors Authority aided four media FAM(iliarization) tours from Japan in January 2014, anticipated to bring over \$11 million in advertising ad exposure to the Northern Mariana Islands.

"The MVA continues to lend its support—financial and logistical—to media and travel

agent FAM tours coming to learn about Saipan, Tinian, and Rota," said MVA marketing manager Bruce Bateman. "The media FAM welcomed in January will be publishing their stories in the late spring, a perfect time to start building interest for summer visits."

Globe Trotter Travel Guide-

book, one of the most famous overseas travel guidebooks in Japan, returned to the Northern Marianas on Jan. 5-18. The editorial team will revise its 250-plus pages about Saipan in its next issue, anticipated for publication in April 2014. The guidebook has been in publication since 1988 and circulates



Regina PREMIUM golf magazine media team visited Bird Island Lookout on their FAM(iliarization) tour of the Northern Marianas on Jan. 25-Feb. 1, 2014. From left, Marianas Visitors Authority marketing specialist James Sakamoto, hair stylist and make-up artist Katsuyoshi Hayashi, producer/program director Yoshimi Kondo, assistant cameraman Toshiyuki Maegawa, and cameraman Yoshihiko Sasaguchi.

45,000 copies a year, targeting men and women planning to travel abroad.

TV show *Sekai no Nihon-jinzuma ha Mita!* features Japanese wives who live overseas and are married to locals. The Saipan show will feature one or two Japanese wives living on Saipan. The show reaches over

4 million households on TBS and 28 other TV stations across Japan. The three-member crew of the show was in Saipan Jan. 25-Feb. 3.

High-class golf fashion magazine *Regina PREMIUM* visited Jan. 28-Feb. 1 and will dedicate eight pages of its 2014 spring issue to the Northern

Marianas. The magazine circulates 60,000 copies, targeting beginning women golfers. Its articles focus on golf lessons, exercise, fashion, golfing goods, and cosmetics.

First Impression produces promotional DVDs and magazines and targets men and women in their 20s and 30s. (MVA)

Rota marks National Disability Employment Awareness Month



Jane Tudela gives an overview of the vocational rehabilitation program and services at NMC Rota on Jan. 30, 2014.

Rota—also known as *Luta* in the vernacular—was the site of important undertakings by representatives of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and State Rehabilitation Council on Jan. 30-31, 2014.

OVR staff conducted presentations during the Educating Employers Workshop held at the Rota Northern Marianas College on Jan. 30.

Jane Tudela, vocational rehabilitation counselor, provided employers and business owners with an overview of the vocational rehabilitation program and services. Tudela has recently been assigned to continue leading the monthly outreach activities on Rota, serving OVR applicants and consumers.

Jiana Camacho, the newest VR counselor, shared information about reasonable accommodations, while Christopher Camacho, OVR manager for administration & operations,

presented on tax incentives for employing qualified people with disabilities and improving accessibility by removing physical/architectural barriers.

Brief remarks at the conclusion of the workshop were given by OVR director Arlene Yamagata, M.S., C.R.C., and SRC chair Isidro Seman.

Through collaboration and cooperation, SRC made possible the travel to Rota of two NMPASI staffers, Tom Thornburgh and Greg Borja, both projects specialists, who presented on the topics of assistive technology and employment, as well as dignity and respect in the workforce.

Special acknowledgement is given to Lillian Ada, planner for the Council on Developmental Disabilities and SRC committee chairperson for Employment & Marketing, for coordinating the workshop in continued celebration of National Disability Em-

ployment Awareness Month.

The following agencies/organizations also provided support to the event: Council on Developmental Disabilities, Trankilu Alternative Financing Program, Northern Marianas College-University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.

On Jan. 31, the OVR and SRC Team led by Yamagata and Seman, respectively, had the privilege of meeting with Rota Mayor Melchor Mendiola.

OVR and the Rota Mayor's Office recently signed a memorandum of understanding pledging full support toward improving services to Rota residents with disabilities whose goal is employment. As a result of the MOU, the OVR and RMO established a Receiving Center at the old Mayor's Office in Song-song Village, with Elizabeth Kani as the OVR-RMO liaison



The Job Fair at the Rota Mayor's Office on Jan. 31, 2014.

with responsibilities aimed to improve communication and coordination by providing logistical and technical support to both the VR counselor and applicants/consumers. Yamagata and Camacho facilitated a mini-

training for Kani to help transition her smoothly into her new role.

The CNMI Department of Labor held their Job Fair at the Rota Mayor's Office on Jan. 31. The OVR and SRC Team at-

tended the job fair and took the opportunity to actively engage in discussions with employers and business owners about OVR's training programs, including OJT and the importance of collaboration and partnership to yield greater employment success for Rota's residents with disabilities. The companies that participated were Ace Hardware, Sasanhaya Service Station, Sinapalo Safeway, DK Brothers, and Kin & Rit Ent.

OVR's mission is to increase employment and promote independence among eligible individuals with disabilities throughout the CNMI. As a partner, one of SRC's important functions is to evaluate the effectiveness of the VR program and services to applicants/consumers with disabilities. (PR)

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS



Belated happy birthday to my dad, Juanito Montano Sr., who celebrated his 70th birthday on Feb. 8, 2014! We love you Dad/Lolo! Greetings come from all of us.



Happy birthday to our best friend, Kenja A. Faisao, center. May the good Lord bless you and shower you with lots of love. Greetings come from your girls.

Business

New health insurance options not available in NMI

Due to the increase in premium cost for the CNMI government employee health plan extension, many government employees are looking for other healthcare coverage options to fulfill their needs. Currently, however, no health insurance carriers in the CNMI have filed 2014 policies or premium rates for the individual or small group market with the CNMI Office of the Insurance Commissioner.

"According to the CNMI Insurance Code, health insurance carriers must file their rates and forms with my office before they can sell them. No new filings so far in 2014 means there are no new health insurance policies being sold lawfully in the CNMI," said Commerce Secretary and CNMI Insurance Commissioner Sixto K. Igisomar. CNMI insurance companies have

expressed concern about selling new policies in 2014 because, due to the strict new rules required under the Affordable Care Act, if one new policy is sold in a given market in 2014, this policy must be offered to everyone, regardless of health status. This "guaranteed availability" provision is one of the reasons insurance company representatives have told Igisomar that they are reluctant to sell new health insurance policies in 2014. Under the guaranteed availability provision, new plans in 2014 must offer robust coverage to anyone during open enrollment, even to someone who is already sick and in the hospital.

"Many people don't know that if they opt out of the CNMI government health plan right now, they won't be able to get coverage elsewhere, such as with Staywell,

SelectCare, TakeCare, or NetCare because these companies haven't filed new plans for 2014 with the CNMI Insurance Section," stated Kaitlyn Mocanu of the CNMI Consumer Assistance Program. "I wish I could direct consumers that walk in my door to more health insurance options, but I have to tell people that the only way to get health insurance in the CNMI now is from your employer. It hurts to have to tell that to someone who is unemployed, self-employed or their employer doesn't offer insurance coverage."

Gov. Eloy S. Inos and Igisomar are working to change this.

"We are working closely with local health insurance carriers, Gov. Inos, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of the Interior to find ways to mitigate the negative

impacts we are seeing in the territories with the implementation of the ACA and to open up these health insurance markets so everyone can have access to coverage," said Igisomar.

Mocanu advises residents who are seeking health insurance coverage to first verify with carriers selling insurance or accepting new applications that their rates or policies are legitimate and in compliance with both local law and the Affordable Care Act.

CNMI residents with further questions on this issue are encouraged to contact Mocanu at the CNMI Consumer Assistance Program for more information. Contact her at (670) 664-3005 or 483-0104 or send an email to advocacyoffice@commerce.gov. mp. (Office of the Governor)

United Airlines replaces styro cups with recyclable ones

CHICAGO—United Airlines is introducing a new, eco-friendly coffee cup to its United Club beverage service beginning this month and on United flights beginning mid-March. The insulating InCycle cup, manufactured by Washington-based technology company MicroGREEN, is fully recyclable and made from up to 50 percent recycled materials. The InCycle cup will replace the non-recyclable Styrofoam hot beverage cups the airline currently uses.

Through MicroGREEN's technology, four and a half InCycle cups are made from a single recycled water bottle in a waterless, additive-free recycling process. The cup is also insulated, which further reduces waste by eliminating the need for a sleeve.

"At United, we are constantly working to improve the sustainability of our products and reduce our waste at the same time," said Angela Foster-Rice, United's managing director of global environmental affairs and sustainability. "This new cup is not only aligned with our overall Eco-SkiesSM commitment to the environment, it is another way our customers can feel good about flying with us."

United is also reviewing its operational recycling efforts to find ways to reduce waste and to increase recycling within its system. This includes a redesign of United's inflight recycling policy and procedures to simplify the process for flight attendants, gen-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

United rolls out new, eco-friendly InCycle coffee cup in United Clubs and in flight.

erate increased recycling volumes and minimize waste.

Over the past six years, United recycled 23.5 million pounds of aluminum cans, paper and plastic from waste generated on board aircraft and in its facilities. The new cup will be added to United's recycling stream, reducing the total amount of waste sent to landfills.

Beyond recycling and improving the sustainability of its products, United has demonstrated leadership in the environment by establishing ambitious, leading-edge

initiatives and programs. United's recent achievements include:

- United in 2013 was recognized as the Eco-Aviation Gold Airline of the Year by Air Transport World.

- The company in 2013 reduced CO2 emissions by more than 811,643 metric tons and reduced fuel consumption by 95 million gallons through fuel efficiency initiatives, exceeding its goal of reducing fuel consumption by 85 million gallons.

- The airline increased orders for new Boeing and Airbus aircraft

that are 15 to 20 percent more fuel efficient than those they'll replace, and now has more than 260 of these new, fuel efficient aircraft on order.

- United is a leader in the advancement and use of alternative fuels, making history in commercial aviation with its partnership with AltAir Fuels to bring commercial-scale, cost-competitive renewable jet fuel to its Los Angeles hub later this year.

For more information on United's commitment to the environment, visit www.united.com/ecoskies. (United)

US economy may be stuck in slow lane for long run

WASHINGTON (AP)—In the 4 1/2 years since the Great Recession ended, millions of Americans who have gone without jobs or raises have found themselves wondering something about the economic recovery:

Is this as good as it gets?

It increasingly looks that way.

Two straight weak job reports have raised doubts about econo-

mists' predictions of breakout growth in 2014. The global economy is showing signs of slowing—again. Manufacturing has slumped. Fewer people are signing contracts to buy homes. Global stock markets have sunk as anxiety has gripped developing nations.

Some long-term trends are equally dispiriting.

The Congressional Budget Office foresees growth picking up through 2016, only to weaken starting in 2017. By the CBO's reckoning, the economy will soon slam into a demographic wall: The vast baby boom generation will retire. Their exodus will shrink the share of Americans who are working, which will hamper the economy's ability to accelerate.

At the same time, the government may have to borrow more, raise taxes or cut spending to support Social Security and Medicare for those retirees.

Only a few weeks ago, at least the short-term view looked brighter. Entering 2014, many economists predicted growth would top 3 percent for the first time since 2005.

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By **MARIE G. MCINTYRE**
McClatchy-Tribune News Service



Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of *Secrets to Winning at Office Politics*. Send in questions and get free coaching tips at <http://www.yourofficecoach.com>, or follow her on Twitter @officecoach.

Co-workers walking on eggshells? Check your attitude

QUESTION: Several years ago, I asked our human resources manager to mediate an ongoing disagreement with a co-worker. We were able to hash out our differences, and the issue was resolved. I assumed this conversation would be kept confidential, but now I'm not so sure.

I have begun to notice that my colleagues frequently preface comments to me by saying "you're not going to like this" or "this might make you mad." Sometimes they just tell me to breathe. Although I have asked them not to begin our interactions with such negative remarks, they continue to do so.

After thinking about this, I finally concluded that either the HR manager or my co-worker must have shared information about our previous conflict. That would explain why I apparently have a reputation for being difficult. What should I do about this?

ANSWER: I don't think you will like my answer, but I do hope you will consider it. Based on your description, I believe you are jumping to some unwarranted conclusions about the cause of this problem. If you are open to a different interpretation, however, you might take some steps that would benefit your career.

You're assuming that your colleagues are wary because they heard about the earlier disagreement, but you seem to be ignoring the fact that this incident occurred "several years ago." After so much time, that single event would not influence current perceptions without more recent evidence.

A more likely explanation is that people are responding to the way you receive unwelcome information. Having observed that negative news tends to irritate or upset you, they attempt to lessen this reaction by providing an advance warning. But since you don't see yourself this way, that reason would not occur to you.

To either validate or disprove this theory, solicit some candid opinions from trusted friends, family members or colleagues. Ask them the following question, using these exact words: "At work, I've noticed that people keep trying to calm me down but I don't know why. Can you help me understand why they do this?"

Encourage honest answers, then quietly listen without arguing or debating. After reflecting upon this feedback, make any changes that seem helpful. If you want to put an end to these annoying comments, you will have to demonstrate that they are no longer necessary.

Q: Before I went on vacation, my manager said that I needed to be available by phone. He seems to think this is a normal request. Do you agree?

A: Unless you have a very routine job, there may be times when others need information that only you possess. For that reason, leaving a contact number is the responsible thing to do.

On the other hand, expecting you to field trivial questions or remain tethered to your phone would not be at all reasonable. So the real issue not whether your boss should be able to call you, but how often he attempts to do so.

Nation

A fresh start for Hillary Clinton and liberals?

WASHINGTON (AP)—As Hillary Rodham Clinton mulls a second presidential bid, liberals are closely watching whether the onetime supporter of the Iraq war moves to the left or straddles the center.

Democrats say economic issues such as raising the minimum wage and protecting Social Security have become paramount for anyone aiming to lead the party after years of tough economic times.

During the 2008 primary campaign against Barack Obama, Clinton was hurt by her stand on the Iraq war while she was a senator. But she burnished her image among party loyalists during four years at the State Department in the Obama administration. Now liberals want to

see how she might carry the torch from Obama.

"We're going to see income inequality play the same role that the war in Iraq played in 2008," said Ilya Sheyman, executive director of MoveOn.org, a liberal advocacy group. "This is less about what she did before. The issue landscape right now is very different than in 2008."

Whether a viable Clinton alternative emerges for the 2016 campaign remains a looming question.

Vice President Joe Biden is leaving his options open. Some liberals hope Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., will reconsider statements that she has no plans to run. Others point to ex-Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer, who addressed a



In this Jan. 27, 2014 file photo, former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton speaks in New Orleans. AP

progressive group in Iowa in December, or Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, who is considering a presidential run but

endorsed Clinton in 2007.

Liberals have backed efforts by Warren to expand Social Security benefits instead of trimming them to keep the program solvent. In a speech at Colgate University last year, Clinton suggested she shared Obama's approach for a "grand bargain" style deficit reduction that would include increases to tax revenue and adjustments to entitlement programs such as Social Security and Medicare.

Progressives want Clinton to take a tougher stand on Wall Street. They grumble about her speeches at private financial conferences, where she can

command fees of \$200,000.

"It's a big unknown on where Hillary Clinton stands on issues like core economic populist issues," said Adam Green, co-founder of the Progressive Change Campaign Committee. He said there are "a lot of people who want to support her and are rooting for her to adapt to the times" but if she doesn't, there will be room for a challenger.

On Super Bowl Sunday, liberals reacted favorably when Clinton urged fellow Democrats to avoid tougher penalties against Iran as the administration negotiates a comprehensive nuclear deal.

"I have no doubt that this is the time to give our diplomacy the space to work," Clinton wrote Democratic Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

During Hillary Clinton's White House run in 2008, her 2002 Senate vote to authorize military force in Iraq gave an opening to Obama. He had opposed the use of force as an Illinois state senator and used the vote to energize his supporters.

Liberals deemed Clinton too hawkish on defense and wondered whether the New York senator was too closely aligned with Wall Street and

would continue the centrist policies of her husband.

Last year, liberals pressured Obama not to choose Lawrence Summers, a former Clinton treasury secretary, as Federal Reserve chairman, and have said Wall Street executives wrongly escaped prosecution for the near financial collapse of 2008.

Democratic strategist Donna Brazile said while some activists may not be enamored with Clinton, the former first lady can connect with them on issues like early childhood education and addressing poverty. "She will be on the right side of history when it comes to progressives," she said.

Former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean, who sought the party's presidential nomination in 2004, said he expected Hillary Clinton to face a primary challenge. But Dean predicted she would "satisfy a large number of Democratic voters, including a large number of progressives."

"There are going to be issues where there is disagreement on. You can never please everyone," Dean said. "The people who are not going to be pleased are well-organized voices and not a lot of votes."

Asked whether he were considering running again, Dean was blunt: "Nope. Not as long as Hillary's in."

Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg biggest giver in 2013



In this July 9, 2011 file photo, Mark Zuckerberg, president and CEO of Facebook, walks with Priscilla Chan during the 2011 Allen and Co. Sun Valley Conference, in Sun Valley, Idaho. AP

SEATTLE (AP)—Mark Zuckerberg and his wife, Priscilla Chan, were the most generous American philanthropists in 2013, with a donation of 18 million shares of Facebook stock, valued at more than \$970 million, to a Silicon Valley non-profit in December.

The Chronicle of Philanthropy reported Monday that Zuckerberg's donation was the largest charitable gift on the public record in 2013 and put the young couple at the top of the magazine's annual list of 50 most generous Americans in 2013.

The top 50 contributors made donations last year totaling \$7.7 billion, plus pledges of \$2.9 billion.

The Chronicle's editor says the most significant fact from the list was the amount of money coming from living donors, which totaled about the same amount as the two previous years combined.

"It's a sure sign that the economy is getting better and people are getting a lot less cautious," said Stacy Palmer, Chronicle editor.

Some of the nation's biggest givers do not appear on the 2013 list, not because they stopped being generous, but because their donations in 2013 were counted as pledges in previous years.

For example, Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates and his wife, Melinda, gave their foundation slightly more than \$181.3 million last year, but they were paying off a pledge of about \$3.3 billion they made in 2004. CNN-founder Ted Turner and Berkshire Hathaway chairman Warren Buffett also made large gifts toward previous pledges.

It took gifts totaling at least \$37.5 million to make the list this year. Forty-two of the top 50 made gifts of \$50 million or more.

Thirty made big gifts to colleges and universities, but Palmer noted most college gifts went to science and research this year, not to buildings, as in previous years.

Ten of the 50 made the list because of bequests after their deaths, including the second biggest giver in 2013, George Mitchell, a Galveston, Texas, man who made his fortune in energy and real estate.

At No. 3 were Nike chairman Philip Knight and his wife, Penelope, of Portland, Ore., who made a \$500 million challenge grant to Oregon Health & Science University Foundation for cancer research. The Knight pledge requires the university match it within the next two years.

No. 4 was philanthropist and former New York mayor Michael Bloomberg, who made gifts totaling \$452 million in 2013 to arts, education, environment, public health and other causes.

Experts increasingly contemplate end of smoking

ATLANTA (AP)—Health officials have begun to predict the end of cigarette smoking in America.

They have long wished for a cigarette-free America, but shied away from calling for smoking rates to fall to zero or near zero by any particular year. The power of tobacco companies and popularity of their products made such a goal seem like a pipe dream.

But a confluence of changes has recently prompted public health leaders to start throwing around phrases like "endgame" and "tobacco-free generation." Now, they talk about the slowly-declining adult smoking rate dropping to 10 percent in the next decade and to 5 percent or lower by 2050.

Acting U.S. Surgeon General Boris Lushniak last month released a 980-page report on smoking that pushed for stepped-up tobacco-control measures. His news conference was an unusually animated showing of anti-smoking bravado, with Lushniak nearly yelling, repeatedly, "Enough is enough!"

"I can't accept that we're just allowing these numbers to trickle down," he said, in a recent interview with the AP. "We believe we have the public health tools to get us to the zero level."

This is not the first time a federal health official has spoken so boldly. In 1984, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop called for a "smoke-free society" by the year 2000. However, Koop—a bold talker on many issues—didn't offer specifics on how to achieve such a goal.

"What's different today is that we have policies and programs that have been proven to drive down tobacco use," said Matthew Myers, president of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "We couldn't say that in 1984."

Among the things that have changed:

■ Cigarette taxes have increased around the country, making smokes more expensive. Though prices vary from state to state, on average a pack of cigarettes that would have sold for about \$1.75 20 years ago would cost more than triple that now.

■ Laws banning smoking in restaurants, bars and workplaces have popped up all over the country. Airline flights have long been off-limits for smoking.

■ Polls show that cigarette smoking is no longer considered normal behavior, and is now less popular among teens than marijuana.

■ Federal officials are in-

creasingly aggressive about anti-smoking advertising. The Food and Drug Administration launched a new youth tobacco prevention campaign last week. At about the same time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention debuted a third, \$60-million round of its successful anti-tobacco ad campaign—this one featuring poignant, deathbed images of a woman featured in earlier ads.

■ Tobacco companies, once considered impervious to legal attack, have suffered some huge defeats in court. Perhaps the biggest was the 1998 settlement of a case brought by more than 40 states demanding compensation for the costs of treating smoking-related illnesses. Big Tobacco agreed to pay about \$200 billion and curtail marketing of cigarettes to youths.

■ Retailing of cigarettes is changing, too. CVS Caremark, the nation's second-largest pharmacy chain, announced last week it will stop selling tobacco products at its more than 7,600 drugstores. The company said it made the decision in a bid to focus more on providing health care, but medical and public health leaders predicted pressure will increase on companies like Walgreen Co. and Wal-Mart Stores Inc. to follow suit.

Asia

North Korea rescinds invitation to US envoy

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea has cancelled for a second time its invitation for a senior U.S. envoy to visit the country to discuss a long-detained American's possible release, the State Department said Monday.

The cancellation comes only days after detained American missionary Kenneth Bae told a pro-Pyongyang newspaper that he expected to meet this month with the envoy. It signals an apparent protest of upcoming annual military drills between Washington and Seoul and an alleged mobilization of U.S. nuclear-capable B-52 bombers during training near the Korean Peninsula. North Korea calls the planned drills a rehearsal for invasion, a claim the allies deny.

The State Department also said in a statement that civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson had offered to travel to Pyongyang at the request of Bae's family. The State Department did not elaborate and referred questions to Jackson, whose spokesman didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Analysts say North Korea has previously used detained Americans as leverage in its standoff with the U.S. over its nuclear and missile programs; Pyongyang denies this.

Bae has been held in North Korea for 15 months. Pyongyang accused him of smuggling in inflammatory literature and trying to establish a base for anti-Pyongyang activities at a border city hotel.

Bae was quoted last week in an interview with the Japan-based Choson Sinbo newspaper as saying he had been notified that the U.S. envoy on North Korean human rights issues, Bob King, would visit him as early as Monday and no later than the end of the month.

Bae said the U.S. government had told North Korea that it intends to send Rev. Jackson, but the North instead allowed King to come to the country, the report said, without elaborating.

"We are deeply disappointed by the DPRK decision—for a second time—to rescind its invitation for Ambassador King to travel to Pyongyang to discuss Kenneth Bae's release," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said. DPRK stands for the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North's official name.

She said the upcoming military drills with South Korea are "in no way linked to Mr. Bae's case," and that Washington remains prepared to send King to North Korea in support of Bae's release.

In August, North Korea also rescinded an invitation for King to visit, saying Washington perpetrated a grave provocation by flying B-52 bombers during previous military drills with South Korea. Last week, North Korea threatened to scrap reunions of war-divided families in both Koreas later this month because of the upcoming drills and the alleged B-52 flights.

The U.S. Pacific Command wouldn't confirm the North's

bomber flight claim but said it has maintained a strategic bomber presence in the region for more than a decade. South Korea's Defense Ministry said Monday that two sets of South Korea-U.S. military drills will begin next Monday and the second, longer one will run until April 18.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry is set to visit Seoul on Thursday and Friday for talks on North Korea as part of an Asian tour, according to the State Department and Seoul's Foreign Ministry.

"North Korea appears to be more scared about the B-52s than (about ordinary U.S. military drills) ... because the bombers can conduct precision strikes against the headquarters of the country's

leadership," said analyst Cheong Seong-jang at the private Sejong Institute in South Korea.

North Korea has recently toned down its typical harsh rhetoric against South Korea and made a series of conciliatory gestures, and outside observers link this softening to Pyongyang's need for improved ties with the outside world in order to attract foreign investment and aid.

Cheong said talks on Bae's release will likely come only after the U.S.-South Korea drills end in April.

Bae's sister, Terri Chung of Edmonds, Wash., said Friday that her family learned from the U.S. State Department that Bae was taken back to a labor camp on Jan. 20 from a hospital he had stayed after losing 50 pounds.



PORT CALL

U.S. Navy Petty Officer Geraldine Igualto, one of 10 Filipino sailors on board the USS *Pinckney* (DDG 91) destroyer, holds her niece during a brief visit by relatives Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014 at the Manila South Harbor in Manila, Philippines. The destroyer is equipped with Vertical Launching System that is capable of housing a mixture of Tomahawk missiles and antisubmarine rockets as well as 62-caliber gun, 25mm machine guns and MK 32 triple torpedo tubes.

ASIA BRIEFS

6 wounded in explosion at Bangkok protest site

BANGKOK (AP)—Police say six street cleaners have been wounded by a small explosion at an anti-government protest site in Thailand's capital. Police Maj. Nopparuj Jitman says the explosion in central Bangkok was caused by an improvised bomb or a giant firecracker. He says the cleaners from the city hall were changing tree pots at a street isle near the rally site when the blast went off before noon Monday. The protesters want caretaker Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra to step down to make way for an interim appointed government to implement what they say are necessary reforms to fight corruption. They've been protesting since November and have battled police on several occasions. At least 10 people have been killed and scores hospitalized during the unrest.

Owners surrender in deadly Bangladesh factory fire

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—The owners of a garment factory in Bangladesh surrendered to authorities on Sunday to face homicide charges for a 2012 fire at the plant that killed 112 workers. Police filed homicide charges in December against 13 people in connection with the fire at the Tazreen Fashions Ltd. factory, including the owners, Delwar Hossain and his wife, Mahmuda Akter. Arrest warrants were issued for six of the accused who police said had fled, including the owners. The November 2012 fire was one of several deadly disasters that have exposed harsh and unsafe working conditions in Bangladesh's lucrative garment industry. A factory collapse last April killed more than 1,100 workers.

Indonesia releases Australian drug smuggler

BALI, Indonesia (AP)—An Australian woman convicted of smuggling marijuana into Indonesia in 2005 has been released from jail on parole. Schapelle Corby's case has been a media sensation in Australia, where initially at least her plight attracted sympathy and expressions of nationalist outrage. The 35-year-old said nothing as she left Bali's Kerobokan prison Monday through a large crowd of reporters. She was convicted of smuggling 4.2 kilograms (9 pounds) of marijuana onto Bali and sentenced to 20 years in prison. In 2010, she asked for clemency, citing her poor mental state. Two years later, Indonesia's president cut her sentence by five years. Corby will have to stay in Bali and cannot return to Australia until 2017.

New Zealand rebukes Japan in whaling row

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—New Zealand has sharply criticized Japan for allowing a whaling boat to enter New Zealand's economic waters. New Zealand says Japanese officials last week ignored requests for the Shonan Maru 2 to steer clear of New Zealand's 200-nautical-mile Exclusive Economic Zone as the whaler followed an anti-whaling protest vessel. New Zealand Foreign Minister Murray McCully says the entry was "unhelpful, disrespectful and short-sighted" and summoned Japan's top diplomat to express New Zealand's "deep disappointment." The Japanese Embassy declined immediate comment Monday.

Filipino marines kill 6 Muslim extremists in clash

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine marines killed at least 6 Muslim extremists and captured one of their jungle lairs in fighting in the south, military officials said Monday.

Backed by village militias, the marines launched an assault over the weekend after several Abu Sayyaf militants were monitored in their jungle

lair near Talipao town on Jolo Island, marine brigade commander Col. Jose Cenabre said.

Marine officers involved in the fighting said three militants were killed in a clash and three more died later in military shelling. Six village militias on the side of the marines were wounded.

Marines were clearing the captured Abu Sayyaf encamp-

ment of booby traps and searching for homemade bombs and rebel documents.

Abu Sayyaf gunmen are still holding more than a dozen hostages in jungle-clad Jolo in Sulu province, including two European bird watchers who were kidnapped last year. The captives were not in the Abu Sayyaf encampment that came

under attack over the weekend, Cenabre said.

The United States lists the Abu Sayyaf, which is notorious for kidnappings for ransom, beheadings and bombings, as a terrorist organization. There are an estimated more than 300 Abu Sayyaf armed fighters who have survived years of U.S.-backed Philippine offensives.

Pakistan: Gunmen kill 8 at religious gathering

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP)—Gunmen threw grenades at a Sufi Islamic religious gathering Sunday in the port city of Karachi and then opened fire on the people assembled to offer prayers, killing eight, officials said.

Eight more people were wounded in the attack, said Aftab Chanur, an official at the hospital who gave the death toll.

The four gunmen on motorcycles first lobbed grenades at

the building where a Sufi cleric was receiving his followers, then raked it with automatic fire, said police official Javed Odho. He said women and children were among the dead and wounded.

Pakistan is 95 percent Muslim, and the majority practice Sufi-influenced Islam. But their shrines and followers have come under attack in Pakistan by Sunni Muslim militants who don't consider them to be true Muslims.

No one claimed responsibility for the attack. But suspicion is likely to fall on militants such as the Pakistani Taliban or their affiliated sectarian groups who follow a strict interpretation of Islam that considers many other Muslims such as Sufis or minority Shiites to be heretics. In recent years militants have often targeted shrines, which they consider to be sacrilegious.

In January, militants killed

six people at the shrine of a Sufi saint in Karachi. After that attack, militants also threatened the cleric who was targeted Sunday, telling him he should close down the house of worship where he would receive his followers, said Odho, the police official. Karachi is a fast-growing city in southern Pakistan with an estimated 18 million residents that has often been plagued by political, religious and sectarian violence.

World

600 evacuated from blockaded Syrian city of Homs

BEIRUT (AP)—Hundreds of civilians were evacuated Sunday from the besieged Syrian city of Homs, braving gunmen spraying bullets and lobbing mortar shells to flee as part of a rare three-day truce to relieve a choking blockade. Dozens were wounded as they fled.

The cease-fire came as Syrian officials arrived in Switzerland for a new round of talks with opposition activists-in-exile to try to negotiate an end to Syria's three-year conflict.

More than 600 people were evacuated from Homs on Sunday, said Governor Talal Barrazi. The operation was part of a U.N.-mediated truce that began Friday between the government of President Bashar Assad and armed rebels to allow thousands of women, children and elderly men to leave opposition-held parts of the city, and to permit the entry of food and supplies.

Forces loyal to Assad have blockaded rebel-held parts of Homs for over a year, causing widespread hunger and suffering.

Dozens of people were wounded when they came under fire as they waited at an agreed-upon evacuation point in the rebel-held neighborhood of al-Qarabis, according to three activists based in Homs, who spoke to The Associated Press by Skype.

Despite the gunfire and exploding mortar shells, hundreds

Bolivia mudslide buries village; 4 dead, 9 missing

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP)—Heavy rains caused a mudslide that buried much of a small mountainside settlement in central Bolivia, killing at least four people, local officials said Sunday. Nine more people were listed as missing.

Jimena Alegre, an official for the Morochota municipality, told The Associated Press by telephone that the slide occurred Saturday night in the Quechua community of Chuypakasa and buried the homes of 15 families.

Rescue squads were digging through the site in hopes of finding more survivors. The first responders were from Cochabamba, which is about 220 kilometers (135 miles) east of the capital of La Paz.

Heavy rains have been falling across most of Bolivia since November and civil defense officials say 46,850 families have been affected.

The government news agency ABI said Sunday that 40 people have been killed, including 10 who died two weeks ago in a mudslide in the Amazon town of Rurrenabaque.



In this photo provided by the anti-government activist group Aleppo Media Center (AMC), which has been authenticated based on its contents and other AP reporting, Syrian men help survivors out of a destroyed building after a Syrian forces warplane's attack in Aleppo, Syria, Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014.

of women, children and elderly men ran toward a group of Red Crescent workers waiting less than a mile (kilometer) away, said an activist who gave his name as Samer al-Homsi. The Syrian activists said the gunfire came from a government-held neighborhood.

The Syrian news agency SANA also reported that civilians came under fire, but blamed "terrorists," the government term for rebels.

At least four busloads of civilians were shipped out, according to footage broadcast on the Lebanese television

station al-Mayadeen. Wide-eyed children, their prominent cheekbones suggestive of malnutrition, tumbled out of a bus, assisted by aid workers.

"Our life was a disaster, we had no food, no water," one distressed woman said.

"There was nothing, my chil-

dren are all sick. They were thirsty," she said, standing with a group of exhausted-looking children as khaki-clad Syrian soldiers, Red Crescent workers in red jump suits and U.N. workers in blue protective vests gathered around the buses.

Some evacuees were to be

hosted in government-run shelters, others were going to join relatives in safer areas, while still others said they did not know where they were going.

Khaled Erksoussi of the Syrian Red Crescent, which is assisting the operation, told the AP that the agency hoped to evacuate as many civilians as possible before the truce expires Monday.

On Saturday, gunmen opened fire on civilians, leaving aid workers wounded and two trucks damaged, Erksoussi said, speaking by telephone from Damascus.

Despite the violence, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, said in a statement that the truce showed "that even in the darkest of nights it is possible to offer a glimmer of hope to people in desperate need of assistance."

The Homs cease-fire was arranged by U.N. mediator Lakhdar Brahimi, who urged the warring sides to aid the estimated 2,500 civilians trapped in the ancient, rebel-held quarters known as Old Homs, to build trust during the first face-to-face meetings of government officials and opposition figures in Switzerland last month.

But the truce only took hold after talks ended, and its last day, Monday, now coincides with the beginning of another round of U.N.-mediated negotiations in Switzerland. The Syrian delegation arrived in Switzerland Sunday evening.

Danish zoo kills giraffe to prevent inbreeding

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP)—Saying it needed to prevent inbreeding, the Copenhagen Zoo killed a 2-year-old giraffe and fed its remains to lions as visitors watched, ignoring a petition signed by thousands and offers from other zoos and a private individual to save the animal.

Marius, a healthy male, was put down Sunday using a bolt pistol, said zoo spokesman Tobias Stenbaek Bro. Visitors, including children, were invited to watch while the giraffe was then skinned and fed to the lions.

Marius' plight triggered a wave of online protests and renewed debate about the conditions of zoo animals. Before the giraffe was killed, an online petition to save it had received more than 20,000 signatures.

But the public feeding of Marius' remains to the lions was popular at Copenhagen Zoo. Stenbaek Bro said it allowed parents to decide whether their children should watch what the zoo regards as an important display of scientific knowledge about animals.

"I'm actually proud because I

think we have given children a huge understanding of the anatomy of a giraffe that they wouldn't have had from watching a giraffe in a photo," Stenbaek Bro said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press.

He said the zoo, which now has seven giraffes left, followed the recommendation of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria to put down Marius by because there already were a lot of giraffes with similar genes in the organization's breeding program.

The Amsterdam-based EAZA has 347 members, including many large zoos in European capitals, and works to conserve global biodiversity and achieve the highest standards of care and breeding for animals.

Stenbaek Bro said EAZA membership isn't mandatory, but most responsible zoos are members of the organization.

He said his zoo had turned down offers from other ones to take Marius and an offer from a private individual who wanted to buy the giraffe for 500,000 euros (\$680,000).

Stenbaek Bro said a significant part of EAZA membership

is that the zoos don't own the animals themselves, but govern them, and therefore can't sell them to anyone outside the organization that doesn't follow the same set of rules.

He also said it is important for the breeding programs to work.

Bengt Holst, Copenhagen Zoo's scientific director, said it turned down an offer from Yorkshire Wildlife Park in Britain, which is a member of EAZA, because Marius' older brother lives there and the park's space could be better used by a "genetically more valuable giraffe."

Yorkshire Wildlife Park said it called the zoo on Saturday with a last-minute offer to house Marius in a new giraffe house with room for an extra male. It said it was saddened by the killing of Marius, but "without knowing the full details it would be inappropriate to comment further."

Copenhagen Zoo also turned down an offer from a zoo in northern Sweden, because it was not an EAZA member and didn't want to comply with the same high standards, Holst said.

"I know the giraffe is a nice



The carcass of Marius, a male giraffe, is eaten by lions after he was put down in Copenhagen Zoo on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014.

looking animal, but I don't think there would have been such an outrage if it had been an antelope, and I don't think anyone would have lifted an eyebrow if it was a pig," said Holst.

Copenhagen Zoo doesn't give giraffes contraceptives or castrate them because that could have unwanted side effects on their internal organs, and the zoo regards parental care as important, said Holst.

EAZA said it supported the zoo's decision to "humanely put

the animal down and believes strongly in the need for genetic and demographic management within animals in human care."

However, the organization Animal Rights Sweden said the case highlights what it believes zoos do to animals regularly.

"It is no secret that animals are killed when there is no longer space, or if the animals don't have genes that are interesting enough," it said in a statement. "The only way to stop this is to not visit zoos."

Focus

Documents reveal chaotic military sex-abuse record

TOKYO (AP)—After a night of heavy drinking at the Globe and Anchor, a watering hole for enlisted Marines in Okinawa, Japan, a female service member awoke in her barracks room as a man was raping her, she reported. She tried repeatedly to push him off. But wavering in and out of consciousness, she couldn't fight back.

A rape investigation, backed up by DNA evidence, ended with the accused pleading guilty to a lesser charge, wrongfully engaging in sexual activity in the barracks. He was reduced in rank and confined to his base for 30 days, but received no prison time.

Fast forward a year. An intoxicated service member was helped into bed by a male Marine with whom he had spent the day. The Marine then performed oral sex on the victim "for approximately 20 minutes against his will," records show. The accused insisted the sex was consensual, but he was court-martialed, sentenced to six years in prison, busted to E-1, the military's lowest rank, and dishonorably discharged.

The two cases, both adjudicated by the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, are among more than 1,000 reports of sex crimes involving U.S. military personnel based in Japan between 2005 and early 2013. Obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, the records open a rare window into the world of military justice and show a pattern of random and inconsistent judgments.

The Associated Press originally sought the records for U.S. military personnel stationed in Japan after attacks against Japanese women raised political tensions there. They might now give weight to members of Congress who want to strip senior officers of their authority to decide whether serious crimes, including sexual assault cases, go to trial.

The AP analysis found the handling of allegations verged on the chaotic, with seemingly strong cases often reduced to lesser charges. In two rape cases, commanders overruled recommendations to court-martial and dropped the charges instead.

Even when military authorities agreed a crime had been committed, the suspect was unlikely to serve time.

Nearly two-thirds of 244 service members whose punishments were detailed in the records were not incarcerated. Instead they were fined, demoted, restricted to their bases or removed from the military. In more than 30 cases, a letter of reprimand was the only punishment.

Among the other findings:

- The Marines were far more likely than other branches to send offenders to prison, with 53 prison sentences out of 270 cases. By contrast, of the Navy's 203 cases, more than 70 were court-martialed or

punished in some way. Only 15 were sentenced to time behind bars.

- The Air Force was the most lenient. Of 124 sex crimes, the only punishment for 21 offenders was a letter of reprimand.

- Victims increasingly declined to cooperate with investigators or recanted, a sign they may have been losing confidence in the system. In 2006, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, which handles the Navy and Marine Corps, reported 13 such cases; in 2012, it was 28.

Taken together, the sex crime cases from Japan, home to the largest number of U.S. military personnel based overseas, illustrate how far military leaders have to go to reverse a spiraling number of sexual assault reports.

In one case, a woman alleged that a sailor raped her. Later, she confronted him in a recorded conversation. She accused him of pushing her down "for sex purposes," after which he apologized for hurting her "in that way."

An Article 32 hearing, the military's version of a grand jury, recommended a court-martial on rape charges, but the commanding officer said no. The charges were dropped.

U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, who leads the Senate Armed Services' personnel subcommittee, said the records are "disturbing evidence" that there are commanders who refuse to prosecute sexual assault cases.

The AP story "shows the direct evidence of the stories we hear every day," said Gillibrand, who leads a group of lawmakers from both political parties pressing for further changes in the military's legal system.

"The men and women of our military deserve better," said Gillibrand, D-N.Y. "They deserve to have unbiased, trained military prosecutors reviewing their cases, and making decisions based solely on the merits of the evidence in a transparent way."

Air Force Col. Alan Metzler said the Department of Defense has been open in acknowledging that it has a problem.

"We have owned that," he said. "We have been public about it."

Metzler, deputy director of the Defense Department's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, said the

changes in military law and policy made by Congress and the Pentagon are creating a culture where victims trust that their allegations will be taken seriously and perpetrators will be punished. The cases in Japan preceded reforms the Pentagon implemented in May, according to defense officials.

The military, Metzler noted, is making progress. The number of sexual assault cases taken to courts-martial military-wide has grown steadily, from 42 percent in 2009 to 68 percent in 2012, according to department figures. In 2012, of the 238 service members convicted, 74 percent served time.

That trend is not reflected in the Japan cases. Out of 473 sexual assault allegations against sailors and Marines between 2005 and 2013, just 116, or 24 percent, ended up in courts-martial.

Further, the 238 convictions are a small number compared with the estimated 26,000 sex crimes that may have occurred that year across the military, according to the department's anonymous survey of military personnel. Sex crimes are vastly underreported in both military and civilian life.

The top U.S. officer in Japan, Lt. Gen. Salvatore Angelella, said the military takes the issue of sexual assault "very seriously."

"Sexual assault is a crime and a contradiction to everything we stand for," he said.

The NCIS provided more than 600 case files—seven years of detailed but

heavily redacted executive summaries of sex-crime reports. The four military branches provided another 400 files covering narrower time frames.

The Pentagon has said its commanders have been using nonjudicial punishment less frequently in recent years. But the documents show that in Japan at least, U.S. commanders are using that authority more often. This is especially true in the Navy, where in 2012 only one case led to court-martial. In the 13 others, commanders used nonjudicial penalties rather than ordering trials.

The authority to decide how to prosecute serious criminal allegations would be taken away from senior officers under a bill crafted by Gillibrand and expected to come before the Senate as early as this coming week. The legislation would place that judgment with trial counsels who have prosecutorial experience and hold the rank of colonel or above.

Senior U.S. military leaders oppose the plan, saying it would undermine the ability of commanders to ensure discipline within their ranks.

"Taking the commander out of the loop never solved any problem," said U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, a former Air Force lawyer who is the personnel subcommittee's top Republican. "It would dismantle the military justice system beyond sexual assaults. It would take commanders off the hook for their responsibility to fix this problem."

Graham, a member of the Air Force Reserves who is an instructor at the service's judge advocate general school, said victims of sexual assault have a far better chance of getting justice than do victims whose cases are handled by civilian courts.

But research by Cassia Spohn, a professor of criminology and criminal justice at Arizona State University, found that civilian courts prosecute sexual assault cases at a higher rate than the military—50 percent compared with 37 percent.

Spohn cautioned that comparing the two sectors is a dicey exercise.

State and local prosecutors typically only file charges in cases they have a solid chance of winning. Conversely, the military may be able to secure at least m i l d

punishment, such as a reduction in rank or loss of pay, in a weaker case because they have more options to penalize.

The military leadership's time to solve the crisis on its own has run out, according to Pentagon critics. A string of episodes in which senior officers were caught behaving badly is further proof that serious crimes should be dealt with outside the chain of command, they say.

"There is a perception out there right now that the military is out of control," said K. Denise Rucker Krepp, a former Coast Guard officer and attorney. "You are not going to attract the best and the brightest if people believe that if you go into the military you are going to be sexually assaulted."

Mark Russell, a psychologist and former Navy commander who was stationed in Japan, said putting commanders in charge of deciding how to proceed with sex abuse allegations can conflict with the unit's mission.

"The mission trumps every other aspect of military life, including sometimes, legal justice and moral standing," wrote Russell, now a professor at Antioch University in Seattle, in an email. "A climate emerges, whereby individuals may feel they can act with impunity, especially in the case ... where it may be 'he said, she said,' with 'good workers' often given the benefit of the doubt."

Many of the Japan cases involved an accuser who said he or she was sexually abused while too drunk to consent, or even unconscious. That makes it all the more difficult to determine whether a crime occurred.

"Weakness is a great fear in the military and something to be avoided," Russell wrote. "Therefore, women (or men) who go out drinking and are raped are often viewed as culpable for having been 'weak and vulnerable.'"

The documents analyzed by the AP do not reveal whether certain commanders had a tendency to punish outside the courts-martial process. Names of the accusers, the accused and commanders are all deleted—for privacy, the military said.

When compared with broader statistics released annually by the Pentagon, the documents suggest that U.S. military personnel based in Japan are accused of sex crimes at roughly the same rate as their comrades around the world.

But bad behavior here by American sailors, Marines, airmen and soldiers can have intense repercussions in this conservative, insular country, an important U.S. ally. This is especially true on the island of Okinawa, home to barely 1 percent of Japan's population but about half of the roughly 50,000 U.S. forces based in the country.

This photo taken Jan. 31, 2104 shows Tina Wilson, who was a victim of sexual assault while serving in the Navy, outside of her brother's home in Del City, OK.

AP

Overdrive

Indian Motorcycle rollout shifts into overdrive as spring nears

By DEE DEPASS
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

The rollout of the famed Indian Motorcycle line wouldn't be quite right if the bikes weren't surrounded by the splashiest of showrooms to put their rugged, stylish looks on full display.

Medina, Minn.-based Polaris Industries Inc., which bought the brand in 2011, announced last week that 140 dealers will sell the bikes by the end of the year, up from just 14 a year ago. The new dealers are pulling out all the stops to boost Indian's swagger, investing hundreds of thousands of dollars to build or expand showrooms.

Last week, the Mies Outland dealership in Watkins, 25 miles southwest of St. Cloud, Minn., put the finishing touches on its \$750,000 Indian showroom, only the second in Minnesota to sell the high-performance bikes. Mies Outland already sells Polaris' Victory motorcycles, ATVs and snowmobiles, but to sell Indian motorcycles, the

97,000-square-foot dealership had to commit to an upgrade.

"The Indian is where a massive amount of growth is positioned. The Indian is going to be huge," said Steve Mies, who owns the dealership with his brother Jeff.

Last week, contractors installed the last of the steel framing for the 3,000-square-foot addition and bolted a second large Indian sign onto the building. Steve Mies said the showroom addition officially opens Feb. 22, but he's already hired four new employees just to work on Indian sales and bikes.

It's a scenario playing out nationwide as a swell in new dealers suddenly need workers to receive, sell and maintain the new Indian inventory. Mies Outland has 47 workers, but needs still more. Mies' dealership presold 50 Indian bikes soon after Polaris unveiled three 2014 models at the Sturgis motorcycle rally last August, and he sold six more bikes after the Interna-



The new Indian motorcycle is featured in showroom at Mies Outland dealership in the Watkins, Minn., Jan. 31, 2014. (Bruce Bisping/Minneapolis Star Tribune/MCT)

tional Motorcycle Show at the Minneapolis Convention Center in January. With the spring riding season approaching, he's determined to be ready.

Last week, a semitrailer truck loaded with Indian bikes

pulled into Mies Outland. By that Friday, beaming customers were in the store picking up their bikes.

Indian motorcycles were first made in Massachusetts in 1901 and went on to gain national fame by breaking speed records in the 1920s and 1950s. It's that story line that inspired the 2005 movie "The World's Fastest Indian," with Anthony Hopkins.

The original manufacturer went bankrupt in 1953, and the product then struggled as subsequent owners attempted comebacks with limited success.

But Polaris is determined to put Indian back on the map. The company has a goal to sell \$750 million worth of Polaris-made motorcycles in seven years. Total bike sales are now roughly a third of that and growing, thanks to the Indian brand.

There is "excitement surrounding orders in the new Indian motorcycles," CEO Scott Wine told Wall Street analysts during a conference call Tuesday. Wine noted that even clothing and accessories sporting the Indian name are selling well. "Our customers love this brand."

President and Chief Operating Officer Bennett Morgan noted that Polaris' motorcycle sales "accelerated significantly in the fourth quarter." They rose 94 percent to \$69 million, driven entirely by Indian.

"Shipped Indians are selling quickly, and early buyer satisfaction and quality ratings are outstanding," Morgan said.

By comparison, sales of Polaris' traditional line of Victory motorcycles grew less than 8 percent during the fourth quarter.

Determined to maximize awareness and profits, Polaris is also taking Indian overseas. Steve Menneto, senior vice president in charge of motorcycles, said the goal is to have 70 Indian dealerships outside the United States. So far, the company has signed up dealers in Canada, Italy, Germany, France, Japan, China, Australia and New Zealand.

MOTORING Q&A

Buying gas? Turn off your engine, don't smoke

By PAUL BRAND
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

QUESTION: I was wondering if you could address a common occurrence—people fueling their vehicles with the engine running. I filled up this morning and was the only one of about 10 cars that did not have the engine running while pumping into the gas tank. The other complaint is smokers who stand by their car, cigarette in one hand and gas nozzle in the other. I realize that a lot of these people don't know how to read, but maybe you can educate some of them.

ANSWER: With most vehicles built since 1996 when the federal OBDII diagnostic and emissions standards were introduced, removing the fuel filler cap with the engine running will defeat the evaporative emissions system and trigger a "check engine" light. A scan tool is often necessary to clear this fault code.

Here's my take on your comment about refueling while smoking: It's not an issue about the ability to read or even common sense. Most folks have some concept of the inherent and obvious danger of having an open flame in close proximity to highly volatile fuel vapors. But since they've never experienced a fuel fire while refueling and haven't actually witnessed this happening to anyone else, they've become numb to the danger and fail to take the obvious and simple precaution—ex-

tinguish the smoke before opening the fuel filler cap.

Wasn't it comedian Ron White who said it best? "You can't fix stupid."

Q: I have a 2013 Ford F-150 purchased new one year ago that now has 7,795 miles. Recently the driver display reads "Battery saver—turn off or restart engine." My dealer ran numerous tests and found nothing wrong and said I should drive the vehicle more. I worry that one morning my truck will not start.

A: A quick Internet check revealed that you're not the only newer F-150 owner experiencing this issue. The battery saver system is designed to prevent the battery from being discharged to the point where it may fail to start the vehicle. This message will illuminate if, with the engine not running, the ignition switch has been left in the on position for 45 minutes or battery voltage reaches a low state of charge.

With the low mileage on your year-old truck, it's possible the battery voltage is somewhat low due to infrequent use, short trips and cold weather.

Make sure the battery cables, terminals and connections are clean and secure. Fully charge the battery at home and then drive the truck for a week or so to see if the battery saver message comes on again. If the message returns after a number of drive cycles, you may well need to drive it more frequently

and/or more miles—or utilize a "battery tender" to keep the battery charged while parked. And ask the dealer to let you know if they see any service bulletins addressing this issue.

Q: I have a 2004 Honda Accord V-6 with 138,000 miles that I purchased new. The car now makes a terrible power steering whine when started cold. The noise will disappear as the engine warms up. The whine does not affect the performance of the steering in any way. The power steering fluid was flushed at 90,000 miles and the dealer said the fluid looks fine, there are no leaks and the belt is in good condition. They recommended doing nothing as long as the power steering is performing fine. Anything I can do proactively?

A: Ask the dealer to review Honda service bulletin 07-086 dated April 2009 that identifies a probable cause for cold-weather startup whine from the power steering pump—air entering the system via the pump's inlet hose O-ring. The bulletin suggests that this repair, if not covered by warranty, "may be eligible for goodwill consideration by the District Parts and Service Manager or your Zone Office."

Paul Brand, author of *How to Repair Your Car, is an automotive troubleshooter, driving instructor and former race-car driver.*

In God's Loving Care †Francisco Omar Camacho

Better known as "Francisco Beba"

Was born on May 8, 1944 on the island of Saipan and went to meet our Lord Savior on February 5, 2014 at the Commonwealth HealthCare Center.

As he entered the gates of Heaven, Francisco was greeted and welcomed by his:

Parents: †Rosario Omar Camacho and †Jose Celis Camacho

Brothers and Sisters: †Simeon O. Camacho, †Antonio O. Camacho, †Margarita O. Camacho

Grandchildren: †Steven Franklin C. Norita, †Damian Thomas C. Pua, †Mariano C. Dela Cruz, †Antonia Philip

Parents-In-Law: †Nieves Cabrera Blas, †Joaquin Santos Blas

Brothers and Sisters-In-Law: †Thomas C. Blas, †Guadalupe K. Camacho

His Peaceful Spirit and Loving Memories Will Forever Live On In The Hearts of His:

Reared Mother: Rosa T. Castro

Wife: Lourdes Blas Camacho

Children: Juanita B. Camacho & Barney Litulumar and Children

Vicente B. Camacho and Children

Emiliana B. Camacho and Children

Theresita C. & Juan A. Pua and Children

Tricia B. Camacho & Juan Cruz and Children

Pasqualina B. Camacho & George Camacho and Children

Franklin B. Camacho

Clarinda B. Camacho & Russ Solomon and Children

Jose B. Camacho

Rosita R. Phillip & Joe Atalig and Children

Brother: Jose O. & Maria Seman Camacho

Brothers and Sisters In-Law: Margarita B. & Francisco Igisair, Antonia B. & Joaquin Aguon, Annie Aguon Blas, Basilio C. & Rosa L. Blas, Thomasa Blas & Ryan, Isabel M. Camacho, Vicenta C. Blas, Raymond C. Blas

He is also additionally survived by 37 Grandchildren, 34 Great-Grandchildren, families and friends.

Mass of Intention are offered daily at Santa Soledad Church at 6:00pm followed immediately with the recitation of the Holy Rosary.

On Thursday, February 13, 2014, our beloved Francisco's remains will leave CHCC Chapel at 7:30am to Santa Soledad followed immediately with Responso, Rosary, and visitation. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00am with Interment Service at the Tanapag Cemetery.

Your prayers, thoughts, and support are sincerely appreciated and may God continue to bless us all.

**Lourdes, B. Camacho, Children, Grandchildren, & Great-Grandchildren
Omar, Camacho & Cabrera, Blas Families**

Life & Style

McCartney, Starr get back to Sullivan stage

By VERNE GAY
NEWSDAY

NEW YORK—The surviving members of the Beatles returned to the Ed Sullivan Theater this week without a studio audience—nearly 50 years to the day after making television and cultural history on its stage.

In what CBS called a “rare joint interview,” Paul McCartney and Ringo

Starr—who performed together at the 56th Grammy Awards Jan. 26—spoke with David Letterman for a segment that will air Sunday night on the network’s tribute, “The Beatles: The Night That Changed America—A Grammy Salute.”

“It’s like going back to your old school, isn’t it?” McCartney said in a clip released Friday.

McCartney also recounted a story

to Letterman about the band’s 1965 “Ed Sullivan Show” appearance, their fourth and final live appearance on the broadcast, featuring his solo performance of the classic, “Yesterday.”

“So, it was decided that I would do ‘Yesterday,’” McCartney said. “But I’d never worked without the band, so now I’m now going to be working solo on ‘The Ed Sullivan Show.’ So I agreed to do it, so I’m standing there ready to

go on, never having worked without the band, a little bit nervous, and there were curtains, and there’s a Teamster on the inside of the curtain so they won’t catch. So I’m standing there all prepared with my guitar ready to go on, and he says, ‘Are you nervous?’ I said, ‘No, not really,’ lying. He says, ‘You should be, there’s 73 million people watching!’”

Starr said his memory of the Ed Sullivan Theater was that it was “four

times bigger than this,” and Letterman pointed out that “there was another balcony. There was a third level of about 150 more seats. So it wasn’t that many more, but enough to make a difference.”

The official beginning of Beatlemania in the U.S. was Feb. 7, 1964, when Pan Am Flight 101 arrived at John F. Kennedy Airport, renamed for the president who had been assassinated in Dallas 11 weeks earlier.

‘Lego Movie’ opens with big \$69.1M box office

NEW YORK (AP)—“The Lego Movie” clicked with moviegoers, assembling an exceptional \$69.1 million debut at the weekend box office, according to studio estimates.

The better-than-expected result made the Warner Bros. collaboration with the Danish toy company easily the biggest hit of the year so far. A sequel is already in development for the 3-D animated film, digitally drawn to mimic a world composed entirely of Lego bricks.

The film has drawn raves from critics. Co-directors and co-writers Phil Lord and Chris Miller (“21 Jump Street,” “Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs”) gave the film a playful tone to capture the whimsy of a child playing in a box of Legos. Characters are largely voiced by comic actors like Will Ferrell and Chris Pratt.

The film marks the biggest animation hit for Warner Bros., a studio that despite popular live-action franchises has struggled to develop animated hits on par with other studios.

“I can’t imagine this not turning into a long-term franchise,” said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box-office tracker Rentrak. “This is such a runaway success that Warner Bros is now a major player in the animated genre.”

Dan Fellman, head of distribution for Warner Bros., said the film, made with a production budget of \$60 million, resounded because of the popularity of the Lego brand. This is the first feature film for the toy company. Fellow toy-maker Hasbro has seen mixed results since the launch of the “Transformers” franchise, which was followed by “G.I. Joe: Rise of the Cobra” and the notorious flop “Battleship.”

George Clooney’s World War II caper “The Monuments Men” opened in second place with \$22.7 million. Reviews have been weak for the based-on-a-true-story tale about the mission to retrieve artwork stolen by the Nazis.

1. “The Lego Movie,” \$69.1 million (\$18.1 million international).
2. “The Monuments Men,” \$22.7 million.
3. “Ride Along,” \$9.4 million.
4. “Frozen,” \$6.9 million (\$24 million international).
5. “That Awkward Moment,” \$5.5 million (\$1.1 million international).
6. “Lone Survivor,” \$5.3 million (\$1 million international).
7. “Vampire Academy,” \$4.1 million.
8. “The Nut Job,” \$3.8 million.
9. “Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit,” \$3.6 million (\$5.3 million international).
10. “Labor Day,” \$3.2 million.

The Sony Pictures film was postponed from a Dec. 25 release because, Clooney then said, more time was needed to finish the visual effects. Clooney served as director, co-writer, producer and star on the film.

“The Monuments Men,” based on the nonfiction book by Robert Edsel and Brett Witter, was particularly popular with older moviegoers, with 75 percent of its audience aged 35 and older.

“It’s right where we hoped to be,” said Rory Bruer, head of distribution for Sony. “There’s a lot of love for George and the ensemble cast.”

Sliding to third was the cop comedy “Ride Along,” with Kevin Hart and Ice Cube. After three straight weeks atop the box office, the Universal film earned \$9.4 million.

The Weinstein Co.’s bid for a young adult franchise, “Vampire Academy,” opened poorly with just \$4.1 million. The PG-13 film, based on Richelle Mead’s young adult novels, is about mortal vampires at a boarding school.

Before opening in North America next weekend, Sony’s “RoboCop” took in \$20.2 million overseas.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Rentrak. Where available, latest international numbers are also included. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

Reporting for duty ...

Highly-detailed 1964 pilot figure

Articulated joints made figures poseable

Real zippers, detailed equipment, accessories

Sewn uniforms with pockets, miniature snaps and buttons



Action figure with life-like fuzzy hair and beard

Clipboard with real paper and pencil

© 2014 MCT
Source: GI Joe: The Complete Story of America's Favorite Man of Action, Hasbro

GI JOE at 50

“America’s movable fighting man” was introduced by Hasbro at a toy fair in New York City in 1964 and originally sold for \$4. Before becoming a movie star in 2009, Joe was inducted into the National Toy Hall of Fame in 2004.

1960

1964
Hasbro Toys introduces GI Joe line of U.S. military action figures

1965

A black figure is added to the series

1966

Six foreign soldiers released, representing the U.K., Germany, Japan, Russia, France, Australia

1967

Talking figures become available; GI Joe nurse introduced (female figure)

1968

Foreign soldiers phased out

1970

Figures with fuzzy hair and beards are released, kicking off the Adventurer series

1971

Bearded black figure introduced

1976

Original 12-inch (30 cm) figures phased out, replaced by a 4-inch (10 cm) version

1982

Coed teams of elite international operatives battling an underworld organization called Cobra released

1992

12-inch (30 cm) “Hall of Fame” figures released

1996

Masterpiece Edition, exact replicas of 1964 figures

2009

“G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra” movie released

2013

“G.I. Joe: Retaliation” movie released

2014

50th Anniversary

Fox cancels ‘The X Factor’ after three seasons

LOS ANGELES—Fox has X’d out “The X Factor.”

Once seen as the next “American Idol,” Fox has canceled the “The X Factor” after three seasons of shuffling judges and low ratings for the musical talent show.

Simon Cowell, who left “American Idol” for “The X Factor,” will now focus his efforts on the U.K. version of the show.

“Last year, for a number of reasons, I had to make a decision to return to

the U.K. version of “The X Factor” in 2014,” Cowell said in a statement.

That would seem to contradict what Cowell said two months ago, when he told reporters that “The X Factor” would return for a fourth season.

Fox Entertainment president Kevin Reilly said, “Unfortunately, there is no ‘X Factor’ without Simon Cowell, but we understand and support his decision to focus on the international formats and on the next phase of his personal

life. We wish him the very best, and it’s our sincere hope that we work together again soon.”

The singing competition series has played musical chairs with its judging panel since its launch. Its original panel included Cowell, his former “American Idol” pal Paula Abdul, veteran record label executive L.A. Reid and British pop star Cheryl Cole. The latter was dropped a few days into the job, replaced by singer Nicole Scherzinger.



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows the character Bad Cop/Good Cop, voiced by Liam Neeson, in a scene from “The Lego Movie.”

LaBeouf makes a scene at Berlin film festival

BERLIN (AP)—Actor Shia LaBeouf hit the Berlin Film Festival in memorable style Sunday, first walking out of a press conference for the film “Nymphomaniac Volume I” and then wearing a paper bag over his head at the red carpet premiere.

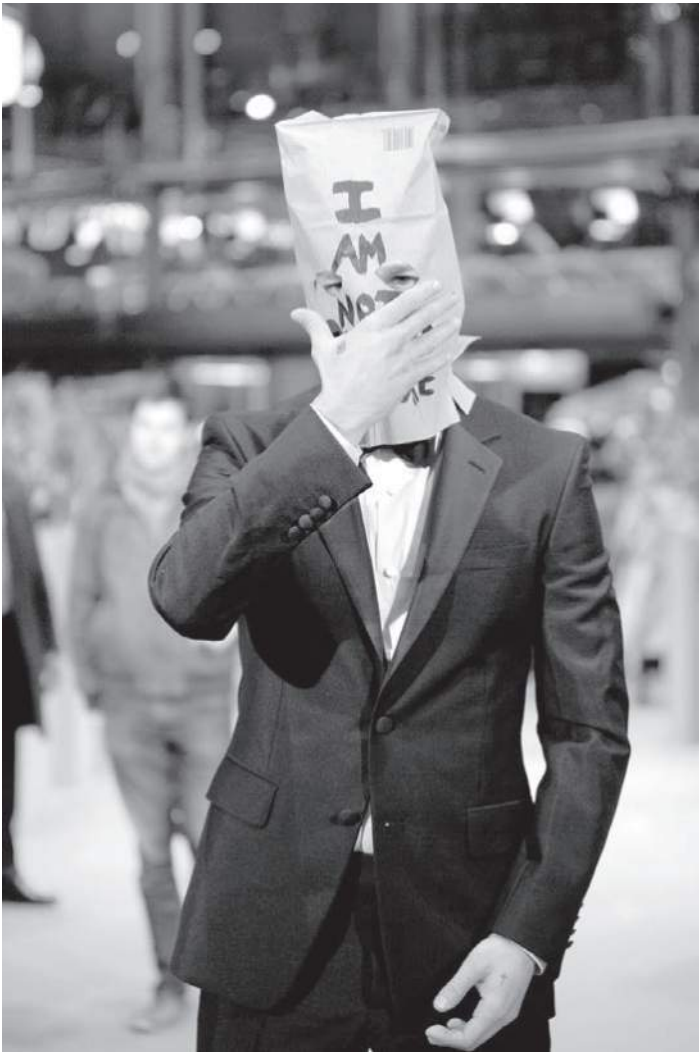
The actor posed for photographers in a stylish tuxedo—and a paper bag with eyeholes and the words “I am not famous anymore” written across it. LaBeouf has frequently used the statement on his Twitter page, and he was identifiable by a tattoo on his hand.

The unconventional attire came shortly after the star walked out of a press conference with co-stars Uma Thurman and Christian Slater to promote Lars von Trier’s film, the first installment of a two-part drama about a woman’s sexual life from girlhood to age 50.

A reporter’s question as to whether the actors were worried about the film’s sex scenes elicited the response: “When the seagulls follow the trawler, it is because they think sardines will be thrown into the sea. Thank you very much.” He then walked out.

LaBeouf’s line was borrowed from French soccer player Eric Cantona, who baffled reporters with it in the mid-1990s following his suspension for a flying kick on a heckler.

The actor has come under fire



Actor Shia LaBeouf poses for photographers, with a paper bag over his head that says ‘I am not famous anymore’, on the red carpet for the film Nymphomaniac at the International Film Festival Berlinale in Berlin, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014.

for borrowing dialogue and story line for his short film, “Howard

Cantour.com,” which closely resembled a 2007 graphic novel by

Daniel Clowes. “In my excitement and naiveté as an amateur filmmaker, I got lost in the creative process and neglected to follow proper accreditation,” LaBeouf said on Twitter in December in response to Clowes’ publisher’s claim that he stole dialogue verbatim.

LaBeouf wasn’t the only one making a statement. Von Trier turned up to a photo call sporting a t-shirt with the logo of the Cannes Film Festival and the words “Persona non grata, official selection.”

In 2011, von Trier was ejected from the Cannes event after a bizarre, rambling news conference in which he expressed sympathy with Adolf Hitler. He said afterward he had been joking, later issuing an apology and then saying he would refrain from future public statements.

The director skipped Sunday’s news conference to talk about the film. The version at the festival increases to nearly 2 1/2 hours the first installment.

At the press conference, Thurman said she enjoyed letting off the “fury of woman scorned” in a monologue von Trier wrote for her in the movie. “It was a real great challenge to memorize seven pages of Lars’ female diatribe of rage,” she told reporters.

“Lars kept saying I was over-acting, but that’s nothing new,” Thurman added.

Mike Tyson gets honest in ‘Undisputed Truth’

By RICK BENTLEY
THE FRESNO BEE

Director Spike Lee calls Mike Tyson the most honest human being he’s ever met, explaining that while most people don’t tend to display the dark parts of themselves, Tyson faces them with an emotional nakedness.

Tyson’s staggering honesty about his life of drug abuse, boxing fame, womanizing, acting career and criminal activities is laid out without hesitation or appeal for pity in the DVD release “Mike Tyson: Undisputed Truth” that hits stores Tuesday. The program, which originally aired as an HBO

special, features Iron Mike in a one-man stage show filmed at the Imperial Theatre in New York City and directed by Lee.

The stage show existed long before Lee got involved. Tyson’s wife, Kiki, wrote it after the couple saw Chaz Palminteri’s one-man show, “A Bronx Tale.”

“I said to my wife, ‘Baby, I can do this.’ Because this is basically what I do when I’m in Europe and Asia. I’m on stage, but people ask me questions and I tell them about my life, and everything that happened,” Tyson says. “She started writing about me. At first she’d write from a wife’s perspective. You know,

like, ‘He wasn’t that bad.’ I said, ‘No, baby, that’s not it.’

“And so I told her who I was back then, and she wrote in her own uncanny way and it came out to be real successful.”

The show looks at how Tyson grew up without parental supervision (never knowing for certain the identity of his father), the disastrous marriage to actress Robin Givens, his beast-like approach to opponents in the ring, his rape conviction and how acting roles have introduced him to an audience that never saw him fight.

Over the years, Tyson took a lot of punches, but no one ever hit him

in the ring with the same explosiveness as events in his life.

“You can heal from a punch, a broken jaw,” Tyson says. “But emotional scars don’t heal. They are always inside you.”

Tyson, 47, is able to publicly face his demons because he’s at the most positive place in his life. He continues to fight a winning battle against drug addiction, loves and (more importantly) respects his wife and strives every day to be the best father possible to his children.

The one-man show isn’t some cathartic form of public therapy. Getting clean and sober was Tyson’s first step to this better place in his life.

He hopes anyone who sees the show will know that while it is hard to get up when you have been knocked down so many times, the ability to rise up and change your life is out there. One just has to take the first step.

Tyson continues to work on being more open and accessible. He often gets stopped on the street by young fans of movies like “The Hangover” who tell him they like his acting. It’s their parents who have to tell them about Tyson’s boxing days.

Acting roles—especially in the one-man show—have allowed Tyson to show off his sense of humor—something he never revealed during his boxing days. Tyson couldn’t show his funny side while he was boxing because that would have worked against his image as being the scariest man to ever get into a ring.

Best friend’s past abuse haunts family gatherings

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: My best friend of 20 years, “Claire,” has suffered bouts of depression ever since I have known her. She recently confided to me that her brother had repeatedly sexually abused her as a child.

When she went to her mother for help, her mother told her she needed to “thank God that it was happening because it would make her a stronger person.” Her mother is dead now, but her father is still alive. I am furious at him for allowing the abuse to happen under his roof.

Abby, the family acts like it never happened! Claire invites her dad to events we plan together like birthdays. How do I attend knowing what I know? I don’t want to sit across a table from him.

My husband is an abuse survivor and feels even more strongly than I do. It has made get-togethers miserable for us. Should we just smile and pretend we don’t know because we can’t fight my best friend’s fight for her? How do we get over the anger?

CONFUSED IN OKLAHOMA

DEAR CONFUSED: Years ago, someone explained to me that depression is anger turned inward. Your friend is enduring these bouts of depression because she was never allowed to express her anger where it belonged—at her brother and her mother. Whether the mother ever told her husband what was going on, or whether it was the continuation of a long family tradition of sexual abuse, is something we don’t know. But if you haven’t suggested to Claire that she could benefit from counseling, you should.

As to you and your husband participating in these family gatherings, my advice is to stop doing it. Celebrate special occasions with your friend right before or after these occasions; many people have pre- or post-birthday get-togethers, and that’s what I recommend in a case like this.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I recently became involved with a longtime female friend of mine when she was in town. I have always loved “Miranda” as a friend, but now I also feel attracted to her as a potential perfect match.

The problem is she lives far away. We keep in touch almost daily. I love that, but it makes me miss her, and I end up thinking about her all day, which doesn’t help. She says she has feelings for me, too, but “the timing isn’t in our favor.”

What can I do to go about my day without letting thoughts of Miranda rule my brain? I am 27 and haven’t felt like this about anyone before. We’ll see each other in a couple of months and the time couldn’t be crawling by any slower.

Abby, are long-distance relationships even worth trying? -

ANXIOUS IN COLORADO

DEAR ANXIOUS: Of course they are. As the saying goes, “nothing ventured, nothing gained.” Years ago, couples who were separated by distances courted via the mail. In fact, some of them wrote beautiful poetry and love letters that are classics. (Check out the letters of Victorian writers Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning.) Couples separated by war before the invention of the Internet also managed to nurture relationships that led to marriage.

So consider yourself lucky that you and Miranda can be in touch every day, even though at this point it’s frustrating. As to the problem of her dominating your thoughts all day, a way to deal with it is to STAY BUSY.

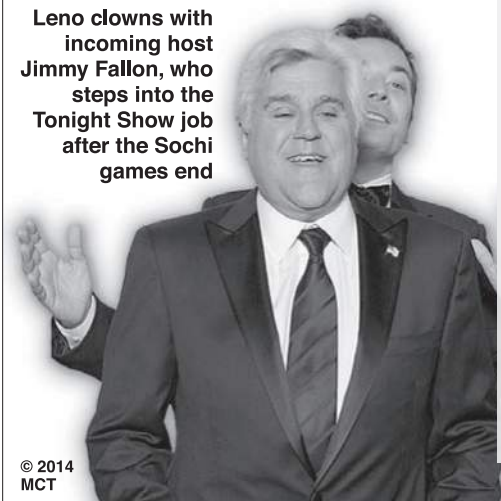
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Leno drew a bead most often on Bill Clinton

A study of Tonight Show host Jay Leno’s joke topics since 1992 shows former President Bill Clinton drew more than one out of 10 of his monologue jokes.

Leno clowns with incoming host Jimmy Fallon, who steps into the Tonight Show job after the Sochi games end



43,892

Monologue jokes since 1992

Top political targets

Bill Clinton	4,607
George W. Bush	3,239
Al Gore	1,026
Barack Obama	1,011
Hillary Clinton	939
Dick Cheney	673
Monica Lewinsky	454
Bob Dole	452
John McCain	426
Mitt Romney	361

Top celebrity targets

O.J. Simpson	795
Michael Jackson	505
Martha Stewart	208
Paris Hilton	153
Lindsay Lohan	153
Robert Blake	121
Anna Nicole Smith	55
Roger Clemens	50
Tonya Harding	49
Alex Rodriguez	49

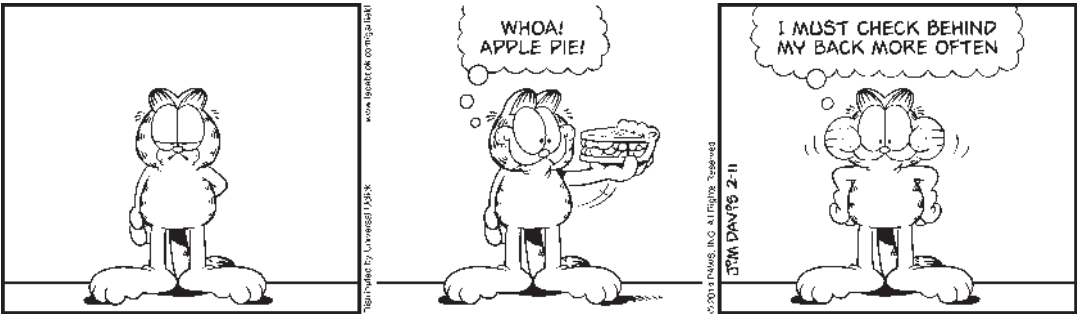
Source: Center for Media and Public Affairs, MCT Photo Service

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson Garfield®

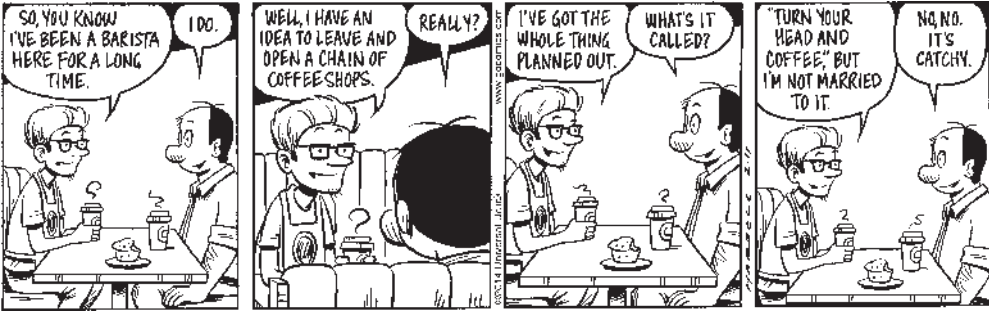
By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Consider
5 "If I may interrupt ..."
9 Dine
12 Opposed
13 Unembellished
14 Basic
15 Bedframe
17 Agent, for short
18 Will-o'-the-
19 Prefix with "red"
21 Battery
24 Wound
25 Without
26 Light,
30 Poseidon's domain
31 Undomesticated
32 Gorilla
33 Stabbing
35 Experts
36 Cereal choice

DOWN

1 Doo
2 Compass
3 Greek
37 Failed to
38 Francis
40 October
42 Carte
43 Highway
48 Needle-fish
49 A Great
50 Molt
51 Toss in
52 Delany or
53 Right on the map?

Solution time: 21 mins.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 2-11

1 OAHU 2 ASH 3 PRAT 4 SCENARIO 5 LACE 6 SEEDLESS 7 AJAR 8 USA 9 AIIAIN 10 JELLO 11 GNAT 12 AWAY 13 SUNLESS 14 GEM 15 SPEAK 16 TIA 17 SEXLESS 18 GALL 19 ROES 20 BUGLE 21 VISAED 22 MAI 23 ESPY 24 SFAMIFSS 25 ALEE 26 UNSADDLE 27 LEWD 28 PET 29 SOYA

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Taylor Lautner, 22; Kelly Rowland, 33; Jennifer Aniston, 45; Sheryl Crow, 52.

Happy Birthday: Discover new possibilities by expanding your interests and developing your skills. Make changes for your benefit, not someone else. It's important to get your priorities straight and head in a direction that will bring you the most in return. Feel passionate about whatever you choose to do or take a pass. Strive for what makes you happiest. Your numbers are 4, 15, 22, 28, 35, 38, 40.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will face opposition if you aren't willing to compromise. Don't let a trivial situation turn into a major argument. Focus on personal change, not trying to change others. Plan your actions and choose your words wisely. **

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You shouldn't have to go far to find a little excitement. Check out what's going on in your community and take part in events that interest you. The time you spend volunteering or helping others will lead to valuable opportunities. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You are best to take a pass if someone tries to interest you in a pricey item that promises the impossible. Concentrate on completing your work and taking care of important responsibilities. Proving how valuable you are will ensure greater stability. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Discuss your plans and get the ball rolling. Do your research and find out exactly what's required of you in order to reach your goals. A

friend you encounter will be interested in getting involved in a project you want to pursue. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't ignore what you can do. The possibilities are endless and if you put your mind to it, you can accomplish a lot and stay within your budget. Home or personal improvements will add value to your assets. Good fortune is within reach. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Make your mark by helping a cause you believe in or someone in need. Your ability to find solutions will make you something of a hero. A unique partnership will give you the boost you need to forge ahead and finish an important project. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't gossip or get involved in office politics. Focus on what you need to get done. Protect your reputation and refrain from making unrealistic promises. It's important to follow through with your plans to avoid looking wishy-washy. **

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Choose whatever direction or project you feel will bring you the greatest creative space and the most adventure. If you enjoy what you are doing, it will be that much easier to get ahead. Give your personal life a boost with a little romance. ****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take care of legal, contractual or financial matters swiftly. Leaving room to let a negative issue escalate will lead to undue stress. Make changes at home that better suit your likes and lifestyle. Stay within your budget. ***

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Your intuition will help you decipher whom can be trusted and whom to avoid. A work matter or business partnership will reveal information that will contribute to a decision you need to make. A unique twist to the way you do things will pay off. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Productivity will determine how far you get and whom you impress. Push, present and promote your ideas. Procrastinating will cost you dearly when it comes to advancement. Take the initiative, especially when money is at stake. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Put money matters, contracts and settlements first. Once you've taken care of personal business, you will be free and clear to share your good fortune with the people you enjoy being with the most. Love is in the stars. ****

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive and strong. You are passionate, caring and helpful.

Eugenia's website—eugenialast.com, Eugenia's android app @ <http://bit.ly/exhoro> and join Eugenia on [twitter/facebook/linkedin](https://twitter.com/eugenialast).

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Difficulty Level ★★

2/11

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6 5 7 2 1
7 9
1 5 6 7 2
3 2 8 4 7
3 1
9 2 4 3 6
6 8

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

9 1 2 6 4 7 5 3 8
5 8 4 3 9 1 6 2 7
7 3 6 5 8 2 9 1 4
6 9 8 7 2 3 1 4 5
2 5 1 8 6 4 3 7 9
3 4 7 9 1 5 8 6 2
8 2 9 4 3 6 7 5 1
1 6 5 2 7 8 4 9 3
4 7 3 1 5 9 2 8 6

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

HOME THEATER IN A BOX Solution: 6 letters

U E E C L S E I O M D N A B
A N D R O S W I M A E R T S R
E I I V A M E O S C R E E N O
D F D T D W P X H W A T C H W
O I U E S S D U O S W T A E S
C L Y N M E P R T B E R A E E
E M P O C I R E A E E D L D L
D S O L M T T I A H R I I A B
O Z C A U E I L W K F E I L U
W A G P O G M O U M E C U S S
N E T I Q U O I O N M O R E A G
L U D T T O U E N R S A R S V A
O U P L A Y E R S Y S T S E T
A M U S I C A U T O M A T I C
D R E T A E H T E K O A R A K

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Attach, Audio, Automatic, Band, Blu-Ray, Boxes, Browse, Computer, Copy, Data, Decode, Download, DVD, Files, Films, Fine, Freeware, Functions, Hardware, Image, Karaoke, Loads, Memory, Movies, Multimedia, Music, Output, Player, Plugins, Queue, Save, Screen, Seat, Slideshow, Social, Speakers, Stream, Tags, Test, Theater, Units, Users, View, Watch, Wires, Zoom

Yesterday's Answer: Daniels

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volume 27, 31, 35, 36, 37 or 38 call 1-800-642-6490. Order online at wonderword.universallclick.com. (Contains 43 puzzle sets.)

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Paul returns in Clippers' 123-78 rout of 76ers



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Blake Griffin had 26 points, 11 rebounds and six assists as the Los Angeles Clippers stormed out to a 31-point lead in the first quarter with Chris Paul back in the lineup and pummeled the Philadelphia 76ers 123-78 Sunday.

Jamal Crawford scored 21 for the defending Pacific Division champions, who were 12-6 while Paul was sidelined with a separated right shoulder that occurred on Jan. 3 at Dallas. The seven-time All-Star point guard had seven points and eight assists in 23 minutes. DeAndre Jordan had 20 rebounds and 10 points, helping Los Angeles increase its division lead over idle Phoenix to four games.

Reserve Tony Wroten scored 21 points for the 76ers, losers of six straight and 13 of 16. Center Spencer Hawes missed all eight shots in 23 scoreless minutes and had just two rebounds.

The 45-point margin of victory was the largest for the Clippers' franchise. The previous record was 37 on Dec. 5, 1975, when the Buffalo Braves beat Cleveland 125-88 at home.

Philadelphia never challenged after the Clippers built a 69-30 halftime lead — matching the largest halftime advantage in franchise history set this season against Chicago. Crawford's 15-footer gave the Clippers their biggest lead, 89-33, with 6:01 left in the third quarter. It was 100-51 going into the fourth.

Thunder 112, Knicks 100

In Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant had 41 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists to help Oklahoma City beat New York.

Reggie Jackson added 19 points and six assists, and Serge Ibaka had 16 points and nine rebounds for the Thunder, who were coming off a 103-102 loss to struggling Orlando on Friday night.

Durant, the NBA's leading scorer, got the best of his duel with New York's Carmelo Anthony, the league's No. 2 scorer. Anthony had with 15 points on 5-for-19 shooting for the Knicks, who have lost four of five.

Raymond Felton and Amare Stoudemire each scored 16 points for the Knicks.

The Thunder made 12 3-pointers and shot 55 percent overall.

Magic 93, Pacers 92

In Orlando, Florida, Victor Oladipo had 23 points, including 13 in the fourth quarter, as Orlando rallied to surprise Indiana.

Indiana stole Orlando's inbounds pass with 9 seconds left and Paul George was able to get off a 20-foot jumper. But it was deflected and rebounded by the Magic, who ran out the clock.

Orlando has beaten the top

teams in both conferences in back-to-back games, having stunned Oklahoma City on Friday. The victory ties the Magic's season-high win streak of three games. It also extends their home win streak to five consecutive games.

Nik Vucevic added 19 points and 13 rebounds.

George led the Pacers with 27 points. Lance Stephenson added 16. The loss ended Indiana's win streak at four games.

Bulls 92, Lakers 86

In Los Angeles, Kirk Hinrich scored 19 points, Joakim Noah had 18 points and 13 rebounds as Chicago held off Los Angeles after nearly blowing a 19-point lead.

Taj Gibson added 18 points for the Bulls, who never trailed against an injury-ravaged Lakers squad missing Kobe Bryant, Pau Gasol, Jordan Farmar, Nick Young, Jodie Meeks and Xavier Henry.

Center Chris Kaman scored a season-high 27 points off the bench for the Lakers, who won their previous two games following a 3-19 slide that buried them in the race for a Western Conference playoff spot.

Point guard Steve Nash, playing his third game after missing 39 because of a nerve problem in his back, had eight points in 21-plus minutes before leaving in the third quarter because of irritation in his left leg.

Nets 93, Pelicans 91

In New York, rookie Mason Plumlee scored a season-high 22 points and matched his best with 13 rebounds in a high-flying performance, as Brooklyn used its best defensive first half in eight years as the springboard for the victory over New Orleans.

Brooklyn held New Orleans to 28 points in the first 24 minutes, its lowest total since also allowing 28 against the Lakers on Nov. 27, 2005. The Nets were fueled by their reserves, with their top scorers coming off their bench and no starters finishing in double figures.

Mirza Teletovic had 13 points and 11 rebounds for the Nets, who improved to 13-5 overall and 9-2 at home in 2014. Alan Anderson scored 13 points.

Anthony Davis had 24 points and nine rebounds for the Pelicans, who had won seven of 10. They used big fourth-quarter comebacks to win their previous two games, but fell too far behind to come back in this one.

Wizards 93, Kings 84

In Washington, Nene scored 18 points and led a strong defensive effort in Washington's victory over Sacramento.

Bradley Beal scored 16 points, hitting two 3-pointers in the final 6 minutes. Marcin Gortat added 17 points and eight rebounds as Washington halted a two-game skid and reached the .500 mark.



Los Angeles Clippers guard Chris Paul, left, gestures to center DeAndre Jordan during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Philadelphia 76ers, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014, in Los Angeles.

AP

Sacramento's Isaiah Thomas scored 30 points and had eight assists. But DeMarcus Cousins and Rudy Gay combined to hit 5 of 27 shots, with Cousins scoring 14 points and Gay finishing with five.

The Kings outrebounded the Wizards 49-38, but made only 35.4 percent of their field goal tries and went 2 of 11 from 3-point range.

Cavaliers 91, Grizzlies 83, OT

In Cleveland, Kyrie Irving scored 28 points and Cleveland won back-to-back games for the first time in a month with the overtime victory over Memphis.

The Cavaliers, who broke a six-game losing streak Friday night against Washington, have won both games since general manager Chris Grant was fired last week.

Irving scored the final four points in regulation to tie it. Luol Deng's 3-pointer on the first possession of overtime put Cleveland ahead for good, 81-78.

Nick Calathes scored 17 points to lead Memphis, which has lost three of four since winning six straight.

Deng began the overtime scoring with a 3-pointer from the corner as the shot clock was winding down. Baskets by Dion Waiters and Anderson Varejao, sandwiched around a 3-pointer by Calathes, left Cleveland with an 85-81 lead. A resounding dunk by Waiters and four free throws by Irving put the game away.

Mavericks 102, Celtics 91

In Boston, Dirk Nowitzki scored 20 points, Shawn Marion finished with 11 points and 10 rebounds as Dallas beat Boston too extend its winning streak to a season-high five straight.

Jose Calderon added 18 points and Monta Ellis scored 11 for Dallas, which won for the sixth time in seven games and pulled 10 games above .500 for the first time this season at 31-21.

Vince Carter scored 14, Devin Harris had 12 points and Samuel Dalembert pulled grabbed 11 rebounds for Dallas.

The Mavericks led by six at halftime and pulled away in the third quarter by outscoring the Celtics 28-18.

Rajon Rondo had 15 points, 12 assists and eight rebounds for Boston, which had won three straight games. Jeff Green added 18 and Jared Sullinger had 11 points and 12 rebounds.

Pistons fire coach Maurice Cheeks

DETROIT (AP)—Even by the Detroit Pistons' recent standards, this was an abrupt change.

Detroit fired coach Maurice Cheeks on Sunday after less than a year as coach, with the Pistons languishing well below .500 despite offseason moves aimed at putting the struggling franchise back in contention.

Detroit is 21-29, and although the Pistons still have a decent chance to make the playoffs in the Eastern Conference, their new roster has performed erratically.

"This was a difficult decision for the organization to make but we needed to make a change," team president Joe Dumars said in a statement. "We have great respect for Maurice and appreciate his hard work."

A person with knowledge of Detroit's plans said assistant John Loyer will take over as interim coach. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the team had not announced an interim coach yet.

The Pistons haven't made the playoffs since being swept in the first round in 2009 - in Michael Curry's only season as their coach. Since then, Detroit has gone through two seasons under John Kuester and two under Lawrence Frank.

After neither of them could make any real progress, Cheeks was brought in as Detroit's ninth coach since the 1999-2000 season.

In addition to hiring Cheeks last offseason, Detroit signed

forward Josh Smith and traded for point guard Brandon Jennings, trying to bolster a roster that already included young big men Andre Drummond and Greg Monroe.

But the mix has been uninspiring for the most part. The Pistons have had problems defensively and have struggled to close out games in the fourth quarter.

The poor attendance that's become commonplace at The Palace hasn't really improved - and Detroit's 11-15 home record hasn't helped.

"Our record does not reflect our talent and we simply need a change," Pistons owner Tom Gores said Sunday. "We have not made the kind of progress that we should have over the first half of the season. This is a young team and we knew there would be growing pains, but we can be patient only as long as there is progress."

Detroit is only a half-game out of the final playoff spot in the East, but that's largely because so many teams in the conference are having similar problems. The Pistons are only three games better than they were after 50 games last season.

Cheeks became the first coach to leave or be fired after 50 games or fewer with an NBA team since Bob Weiss, who coached only 30 games for Seattle in 2005-06, according to STATS. That does not include interim coaches.

"The responsibility does not fall squarely on any one

individual, but right now this change is a necessary step toward turning this thing around," Gores said.

"I still have a lot of hope for this season and I expect our players to step up. I respect and appreciate Maurice Cheeks and thank him for his efforts; we just require a different approach."

The Pistons have won four of six, including back-to-back blowouts at home against Brooklyn and Denver on Friday and Saturday. They host San Antonio on Monday night, and the team has not made any announcement about who will coach that game.

Cheeks previously coached Portland and Philadelphia, a team he won an NBA title with as a point guard. The Pistons gave him his third shot to be an NBA head coach in June.

Gores was in attendance at a recent game and said he thought the team was better than its record.

"I'm not satisfied. Our job is to make sure that our players are at their maximum," Gores said after that Feb. 1 game against Philadelphia. "I'm not satisfied with the job I'm doing. I'm not satisfied with the job anyone is doing."

At that point, speculation centered around the upcoming trade deadline and the possibility that Detroit might shake up its roster again. Now, the Pistons are hoping another coaching change can improve the franchise's outlook.

Russia wins team figure skating, 1st gold of Sochi



SOCHI, Russia (AP)—A master showman and four-time Olympic medalist, Evgeni Plushenko knows brilliance on the ice.

He saw it Sunday night inside the Iceberg at Sochi's Olympic Park from a countrywoman half his age. And he is certain Russia's figure skating future is secure in the skates of Julia Lipnitskaia.

"She is a genius," Plushenko said.

Along with eight teammates, the 31-year-old veteran and 15-year-old Olympic rookie won the new event of team figure skating and lifted the host nation to its first gold medal of the Sochi Olympics. Together, they put Russia back atop a sport it once dominated.

"My main motivation today," Lipnitskaia said, "was not to let the team down."

There was no chance of that in an arena packed with her exulting countrymen, including President Vladimir Putin. The Russians skated away from Canada and the United States to win the gold before the final free dance even started.

In no discipline did Russia finish worse than third, compiling 75 points to Canada's 65 that won silver and the 60 that gave bronze to the Americans.

It was a rout built on the experience of Plushenko, the consummate entertainer who now has two golds and two silvers—a record for modern-era figure skaters.

It was victory capped by the freshness of Lipnitskaia, who donned a Russia baseball cap when she was done with her sublime tour of the ice, sat with her triumphant teammates and grinned like the school kid she is.

"I was calm," Lipnitskaia said, adding it was her coaches, parents and teammates who were nervous. "I'm happy with



Evgeni Plushenko of Russia waves to spectators following the flower ceremony after Russia placed first in the team figure skating competition at the Iceberg Skating Palace during the 2014 Winter Olympics, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014, in Sochi, Russia.

my marks, the scores overall, for the team and for all of Russia. I am so pleased all the country could help me."

That includes Putin, who per-

sonally congratulated the team after their victory and picked the perfect competition to make his first at these games. Also in the Iceberg stands: members of

the Russian ice-hockey team, Olympic champion gymnast Alina Kabayeva and two-time Olympic champion pole vaulter Yelena Isinbayeva.

"We feel joy and honor," said ice dancer Elena Ilinykh of Putin's presence. "It was inspirational."

That some other countries sat out their top skaters or that the Russians did the same in pairs and dance didn't matter. This was never much of a contest.

"This games is the hardest for me," Plushenko said. "All the fans are cheering so hard that you literally cannot do badly because they do everything with you. You get goose bumps."

The Americans' bronze effort was led by world champions Meryl Davis and Charlie White, who won both the short and free dance, and helped by national champion Gracie Gold's superb free skate, which the judges scored second behind Lipnitskaia.

"We were looking forward to this event," White said. "We feel like we were out there for each other and with each other."

Davis and White beat their top rivals and training partners, defending champions Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir of Canada, in both dance disciplines. Canada didn't win any segment, but built enough points throughout to take silver.

American Jason Brown of Highland Park, Ill., was fourth in his first major senior international event.

But those are just details.

This was a night for a Russian show that might be celebrated as much as the Bolshoi.

It signals the country's return to the top of a sport it had owned for decades. As the Soviet Union or Russia, the host nation had won 51 Olympic figure skating medals. But there were no golds in Vancouver four years ago, a first since the country was blanked in 1960.

Now, in the first figure skating event of the Sochi Games, Russia stood atop the medals podium.

It's a place the sensational Lipnitskaia could make her own, just as Plushenko has done for more than a decade. Her routine to "Schindler's List" was mesmerizing. With maturity and grace beyond her years, she clearly was never bothered by her surroundings on this golden night for Russia.

"She's dynamite," Gold said while Lipnitskaia was still skating. "She's 15 and completely unfazed."

Lipnitskaia then contorted her body into one of her spins that a human body shouldn't be able to perform.

"She has no spine," Gold added with a chuckle. "But she has iron in her bones."

Give Plushenko plenty of credit, too. He says he's had 12 surgeries. He barely competed after finishing second to American Evan Lysacek in 2010 at the Vancouver Games. And he had to convince his federation he deserved to be in Sochi after finishing second at the national championships.

Mission accomplished, with a golden hue.

Skating to "Best of Plushenko," there were mistakes in his jumps and not much in between them aside from the required footwork. No, it was not his best, but he scored 168.20 points.

"Today he was a good member of the team," said his long-time coach, Alexei Mishin. "He's enough famous and enough great."

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. (AP)—Even with his high-powered telescope, Jimmy Walker might have had a hard time finding himself among the stars.

Just four months ago, Walker began his eighth season on the PGA Tour with no wins in 187 attempts. With a little more drama than he wanted Sunday in the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, he held on for his third victory in his last eight tournaments.

In the last 20 years on the PGA Tour, only Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and David Duval have won so often so early in a season.

"I don't know if it was just a matter of doing it once and then having it happen again and then happen again," Walker said holding a 5-foot par putt on the 18th at Pebble Beach for a 2-over 74. "I've always felt like I could win out here, and I think that's what you have to believe to be

Walker hangs on to win at Pebble Beach

out here—that you belong and that you can win. And finally, it happened. And it's cool that it's happened a couple more times. Quickly."

He was feeling a little more heat than he needed only another cool, cloudy afternoon on the Monterey Peninsula.

Walker had a six-shot lead at the start of the final round. He was still five shots clear when he made the turn, and he was two shots ahead with two to play. With two putts for the win from 25 feet, he ran his birdie attempt about 5 feet by the hole and had to make that to avoid a playoff with Dustin Johnson and Jim Renner.

"It's drama, man," Walker said on the 18th green. "It was too much for me."

The finish wasn't what he wanted. The result was what Walker has come to expect.

He was never seriously challenged until Johnson, and then Renner, put together a strong finish. Johnson, a two-time winner at Pebble Beach, closed with a 66 on a card that included three bogeys. Renner, who had yet to make a cut all year, made five birdies on the back nine for a 67.

Walker made a 10-foot birdie on the 11th hole and was seemingly on his way.

But he hit a poor chip on the par-3 12th for a bogey. He three-putted the 13th for a bogey. He three-putted the 17th for bogey, missing his par putt from 3 1/2 feet.

"I hate three-putting," Walker said. "I had two of them back there, and definitely didn't want another one on the last."

Walker finished on 11-under 277 and earned \$1.188 million, expanding his lead in the Ryder Cup standings to more than \$1 million over Mickelson in second place. The Ryder Cup is based on PGA Tour earnings, though there are still four majors (which count double), three World Golf Championships and The Players Championship remaining.

For now, the stars are aligned for Walker better than anything he sees through his high-powered telescope, his hobby over the last five years.

"I just go out and play golf," Walker said. "This is what I want to do and I've worked really hard to do it, to be here, and to be in this position and it's really cool."

Jordan Spieth had to return

Sunday morning to complete his third round, which ended with his sixth three-putt of the round for a 78. He faced Pebble at its most vicious throughout the third round, though he bounced back with a bogey-free 67 to at least tie for fourth with Kevin Na (69).

And he hasn't lost his sense of humor.

"Yesterday was a day where you want to play Pebble Beach in that weather once in your life," Spieth said. "You just don't want it be Saturday when you're in the lead."

Chalk it up to another learning experience for Spieth, who said his 36 putts were more a product of not having the speed than the less-than-smooth quality.

"I felt like I needed birdies when I didn't," he said.

Another strong finish belonged to Graeme McDowell, returning

to Pebble for the first time since his U.S. Open title in 2010. He closed with a 67, happy with a week in which he would have settled for just knocking some rust off his game before heading to Riviera next week.

Outside of Walker, however, the big winner was Renner.

He was among the Web.com Tour graduates who played poorly in the four "finals" event that determine priority ranking, and struggled to get into tournaments. In his fifth start, he not only made his first cut, Renner earned a spot at Riviera next week and will be in better position to get into events over the next couple of months.

"It was pretty big," Renner said. "I just knew I needed a good week. My back was up against the wall, and that's something I'm familiar with and I don't mind it. But I'm happy that I freed myself up a little bit for the rest of the year."



Sam could become NFL's 1st openly gay player

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP COLLEGE FOOTBALL WRITER



Tolerance is about to be tested in the National

Football League.

And Michael Sam hopes his ability is all that matters, not his sexual orientation.

Missouri's All-America defensive end came out to the entire country Sunday night and could become the first openly gay player in America's most popular sport.

"I just want to go to the team who drafts me," Sam told ESPN in an interview that aired Sunday, "because that team knows about me, knows that I'm gay, and also knows that I work hard. That's the team I want to go to."

Nobody has ever done this before.

In interviews with ESPN, The New York Times and Outsports, Sam said publicly for the first time that he was gay. He said he came out to his teammates and coaches at Missouri in August.

Sam will participate in the NFL combine later this month in Indianapolis and is projected to be a mid-round draft pick in May.

"Hopefully it will be the

same like my locker room," he told ESPN. "It's a workplace. If you've ever been in a Division I or pro locker room, it's a business place. You want to act professional."

Sam received much public support Sunday night from people throughout the world of sports.

"I can't wait to cheer for whatever lucky team that drafts (at)MikeSamFootball. Personally I hope he goes to my favorite team. The (at)Colts" tweeted Jason Collins, the pro basketball player who said publicly last season that he is gay.

There also were words of caution.

Offensive lineman Frank Garcia, who played nine seasons (1995-2003) in the NFL with the Panthers, Rams and Cardinals, said Sam could face "huge challenges" in the league.

Garcia was teammates and good friends with defensive lineman Esera Tuaolo, who announced he was gay on HBO's Real Sports in 2002 - three years after he left the NFL.

Garcia said although he and Tuaolo regularly hung out as teammates in Carolina in 1999, Tuaolo never once let on that he was gay.

"I think a lot of guys in the



In this Jan. 1, 2014, file photo, Missouri senior defensive lineman Michael Sam speaks to the media during an NCAA college football news conference in Irving, Texas.

NFL are going to say they will accept it, but there are a lot of guys who won't," said Garcia, now a sports radio show host with WFNZ-AM in Charlotte. "The reality is Michael Sam is going to open himself up to a lot of criticism and a lot of challenges. Those are challenges most gay people have to go through, but when you are dealing with alpha males and some meat-heads in an NFL locker room it's amplified. And there are some guys who have strong religious beliefs, too, so he's going to be judged. He's going to face some things that are going to be very difficult to overcome."

The 6-foot-2, 255-pound Sam participated in the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala., last month after leading the Southeastern Conference in sacks (11.5) and tackles for loss (19). He was the SEC defensive player of the year.

There have been a few NFL players who have come out after their playing days, including Kwame Harris and Dave Kopay.

Collins, a 35-year-old backup center, came out after last season when he was a free agent and was not signed this season. MLS star and U.S. national team player Robbie Rogers also came out a year ago.

"His courage will inspire mil-

lions to live their truth," Rogers tweeted about Sam.

Division III Willamette kicker Conner Mertens, a redshirt freshman, said last month he was bisexual.

"We admire Michael Sam's honesty and courage," the NFL said in statement. "Michael is a football player. Any player with ability and determination can succeed in the NFL. We look forward to welcoming and supporting Michael Sam in 2014."

Sam's announcement comes at a time gay rights and sports have collided at the Olympics in Sochi. Russia's anti-gay propaganda law has received much attention, and criticism, because of the games.

"By rewriting the script for countless young athletes, Michael has demonstrated the leadership that, along with his impressive skills on the field, makes him a natural fit for the NFL," said Sarah Kate Ellis, president of GLAAD, a leading lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocacy organization. "With acceptance of LGBT people rising across our coasts—in our schools, church-

es, and workplaces—it's clear that America is ready for an openly gay football star."

The NFL's sexual orientation, anti-discrimination and harassment policy states:

"Coaches, General Managers and others responsible for interviewing and hiring draft-eligible players and free agents must not seek information concerning or make personnel decisions based on a player's sexual orientation. This includes asking questions during an interview that suggest that the player's sexual orientation will be a factor in the decision to draft or sign him.

"Examples: Do you like women or men? How well do you do with the ladies? Do you have a girlfriend?"

Carolina Panthers running back DeAngelo Williams tweeted: "I could care less about a man's sexual preference! i care about winning games and being respectful in the locker room!"

Williams' teammate, cornerback Drayton Florence, posted on his Twitter account: "No comment but it can be a distraction in the locker room. At least he's open with it much respect!"

TESTED

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The victory was the second in a row for Happy Birfdy against the same squad, as Mister and Quinn downed Wisley and Jordan earlier in the winner's bracket semifinals, 21-20. That's What She Said then earned another crack at Happy Birfdy when it eliminated What's Clay McCullough-Stearns and Andrew Johnson in the loser's bracket semis, 21-16.

The eight participating teams played in the double-elimination playoffs after a round-robin preliminary.

Happy Birfdy finished first in Group A to get the top seeding in the playoffs and defeated last-ranked Rob Epley and James McAllister of Ro Bo in the first round, 21-0.

Bruce + Chris' Bruce Berline and Chris Nelson placed second in Group A and drew Wrecking Balls' Greg and Jeff Elliot in the opening round, winning at 21-14 to set up a quarterfinal duel against Happy Birfdy in the upper half of the bracket.

In the lower half, That's What She Said was paired against One Time's Leo Blaas and Leo Wania, cruising to a 21-9 win for a quarterfinal date with PJ's Jess Palacios and Jazz Roscow.

PJ advanced after a 21-13 win over What, but bowed to That's What She Said to fall to the loser's bracket.

PJ went on to eliminate Wrecking Balls to remain in contention, while What also stayed afloat after ousting One Time and Bruce + Chris. What and PJ then collided for the right to face That's What She Said in the last semis match with the former prevailing, 21-10.

Meanwhile, in the women's division Ticonderoga's Jennifer Douglas and Christen Steinkuller came out of the loser's bracket to clinch the championship.

Ticonderoga bowed to LOL's

Charnessa Lizama and Tony Yamada in the winner's bracket semis, 13-21, and had to knock out Sisters' Phalai Frink and Zena Demapan in the loser's group, 21-13, to take the second finals berth. In the title showdown, Ticonderoga defeated LOL twice, 21-13, 15-9, to steal the championship.

Five other teams joined the women's division contest. The list includes Jandreo's Nicole Arenovski, A2's Angie Mister and Athena Andrews, Yuuki's Tomoko Epley and Linda Anastacio, For the Love's Laurie Peterka and Knollynn Gechig, and Chinay's Adele Hudkins and Jennifer Tan.

hand Comets I its third win in as many games and a share of the Major lead with IT&E, Hustlers, and defending champion Falcons. With Cabrera on the mound, Comets II made it to scoring position only once with Ried Teregeyo walking and stealing second and third. Teregeyo never reached home, as Cabrera struck out the next two batters to end the lopsided match one inning early. The Comets I pitcher also struck out leadoff batter Alvin Hocog.

Besides his outstanding pitching, Cabrera also contributed to the Comets I's offense, going 2-for-3 and scoring two runs. Vincent Nakamura had two runs, too, and two RBIs on a 2-for-3 stint at the plate. Francisco Frederick was 3-for-3, adding three runs and one RBI. Comets I scored in each of the five innings to whip Comets II.

Hustlers 14, Ol'Aces 4

The Hustlers grabbed a share of the division lead after finishing off the Ol'Aces (1-2) in only four innings.

The Hustlers also had a no-no with Darvin Manalo pitching three innings and Leon Camacho relieving him in the fourth and last inning and still allowing no hits to the Ol'Aces. Manalo had seven strikeouts, while Camacho added two. Though the two Hustlers pitcher had a no-hitter, the Ol'Aces managed to score one run in the first inning off a passed ball and three in the third off errors.

The Hustlers also made it to the board in the first inning with Lizama's triple driving Mark

Tabora home. Lizama also scored off an Ol'Aces' miscue and got another one in the second inning where the Hustlers opened an 8-1 advantage. The Hustlers gained three runs off passed balls in the second inning, one each from a stolen fish and sacrifice fly, and a base hit. The six other runs came off five more Hustlers' booboos in the fourth and another passed ball in the third.

Falcons 12, Rockies 3

The Falcons joined the four-way tie for the lead after outclassing the IP&E Rockies (1-2) last Saturday.

Aven Evangelista started out for the Falcons, giving up only one run and two hits to lift the Falcons to their third straight victory. Evangelista also earned four strikeouts before leaving the mound in favor of Joel Norita in the fifth inning.

The Falcons managed to score 10-plus runs against the Rockies despite a slow start, as it capitalized on the Rockies erratic defense in the next two innings. The Falcons got four of their five runs in the second inning off the Rockies' miscues and continued to advance to bases in the fourth en route to a four-run output. The Falcons, who got into the board off Justin Canco's RBI single, had two runs off passed ball in the fourth and one each off a sacrifice out and Evangelista's base hit. Canco then ended what he started, blasting a two-run homer at the top of the last inning.

The Rockies answered with only two runs at the bottom of the last, failing to extend the match.

Meanwhile, results of the two other games over the weekend will be reported later this week.

FAMILY

From Page 28

and son, mother and daughter, sisters, brothers, grandmother and grandson, husband and wife, and even an entire family joined last Saturday's early morning swim.

The Goodwins, mother Tina, father Tim, and siblings Steven and Milan, led the nearly 50 participants in the annual race. Tim topped the 800-meter swim, completing one loop of the race in 15:17, while Steven finished ninth after clocking in at 17:55. Tina and Milan came out of the water together before the latter beat her mother on the way to the finish line. Milan submitted 21:03 against Tina's 22:19.

In the same one-loop race, Richard Villagomez accompanied his daughter Susana,

who made it to the shore at the 22:28 mark. Richard stayed in the water a bit and checked in at 23:24. Susana's brother Richard Jr. finished earlier, clocking in at 19:23, while her sister Nieves joined the shortest race in the day (about 200m) and logged 5:51.

Wataru Kadokura and Dino Sato were also in the 200m race, submitting 5:27 and 5:42, respectively, while their siblings Akira Kadokura and Ayaka competed in the 800m swim. Akira timed in at 15:53 and was fourth overall behind Tim Goodwin, co-second placers Rintaro Miyawaki (15:27) and Taiyo Akimaru (15:27), and Sami Nimura (15:45), while Ayaka was ranked seventh after registering 16:28.

Jinie Thompson also raced in the 800m swim and recorded 20:14 (No. 14 place), while older sister Jinju participated in the

three-loop, 2.4-K race and made it to the Top 10 with her ninth-best time of 49:36.

Other 800m finishers were Leo Takahashi (15:54), Kaitlin Mattos (16:33), R.J. Pierce (18:49), Miku Torres (18:54), Steven Johnson (19:05), Jun Lee (20:44), and Kenneth Cave (20:57).

In the 2.4K swim, mother and daughter Conatsu and Ayumi Kaga completed the event with the former having a better time than her mother, 48:17 to 57:27. Husband and wife Joshua and Mamiko Berger were in the same race and logged 51:09 and 59:25, respectively.

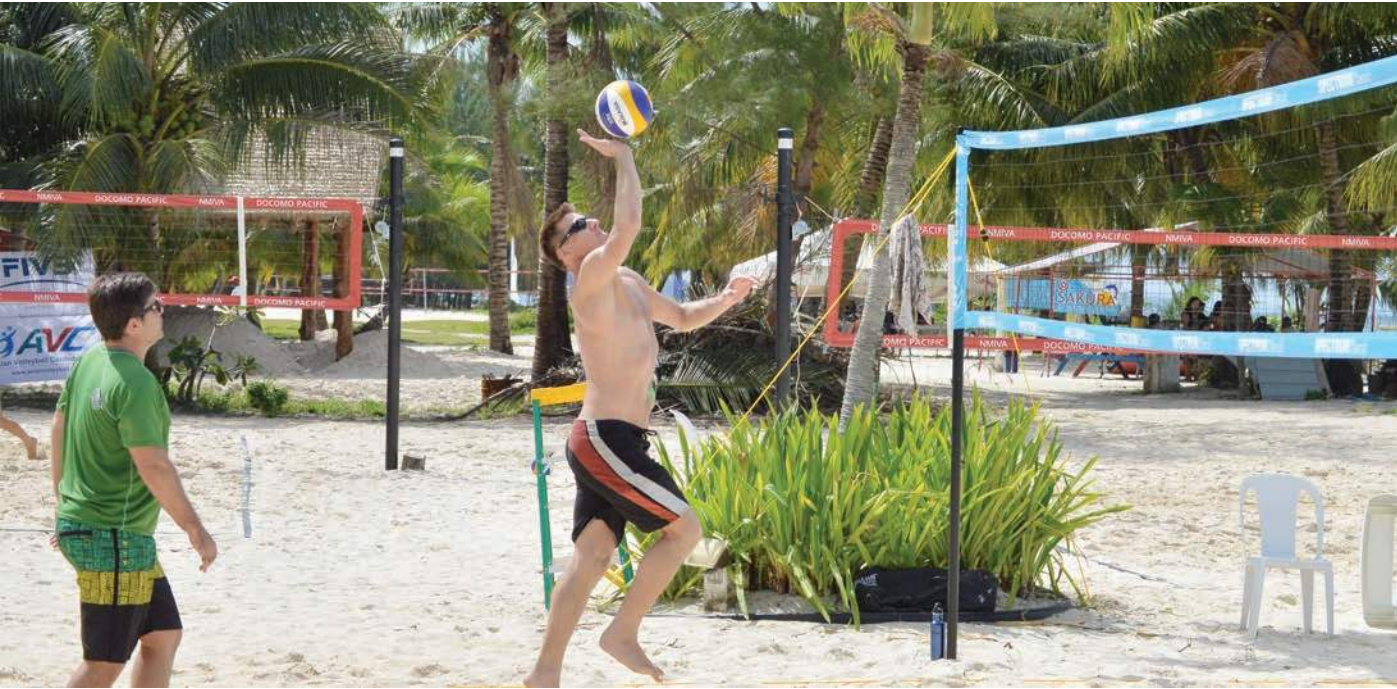
Gary De Guzman, one of SSC's coaches, had the fastest time in the three-loop race, submitting 42:45, while Suzy Kindel came in at second with her 46:28. Youth swimmers Rinto Takahashi (48:06), David Boyer (48:07), and Jinnosuke Suzuki

(48:13) rounded out the Top 5. Other finishers were Rinto's father Kaoru Takahashi (48:38), Kanae Quinn (49:29), Atsuko Sato (50:57) Manny Sitchon (53:94), Hyun Tae Choi (57:43), Danny Calvo (57:50), Tomomi Sato (57:59), Kimiko McKagan (58:55), and Ricky Castro (1:03:01).

In the longest race of the day, a five-loop swim (nearly 5K), Taiyo Akimaru's older brother Kento posted the best time (59:45). Kento was the lone swimmer to complete five loops in less than an hour, as second placer Victoria Chentsova submitted 1:00:00.02. Christian Villacrusis was third after registering 1:06:16, while Taiga Sato (1:06:17) and Lennosuke Suzuki (1:09:13) came in at fourth and fifth. R.J. Pierce's grandmother Carol Lynn completed the finishers' list after timing in at 1:16:51.

2014 For the Love of Volleyball Tournament

PHOTOS BY ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Bruce Berline goes for a return, while teammate Chris Nelson stays back.



Jesse Palacios receives a shot.



That's What She Said's Tyler Wisley, who teamed up with Rob Jordan, serves to Bruce Berline and Chris Nelson during the preliminary game in the 2014 For the Love of Volleyball Tournament last Saturday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan sand court.



Jennifer Tan makes a return.



Jazz Roskow waits for a serve.



Linda Anastacios sprawls for the ball.



Athena Andrews hits the ball near the net.



Angie Mister makes a dump.



Teammates Leo Blas, right, and Leo Wania celebrate a point.



Russ Quinn makes a roll shot against Jazz Roskow.



**Paul returns
in Clippers'
123-78 rout
of 76ers**
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**Russia wins
team figure
skating, 1st
gold of Sochi**
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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tyce Mister goes for a tip against Jazz Roskow, while Russ Quinn and Jesse Palacios stand by for the next play during their elimination game in the For the Love of Volleyball Tournament last Saturday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan sand court.

Tested pair takes 'For the Love' men's crown

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The reliable duo of Tyce Mister and Russ Quinn bested seven other pairs to win the men's division title in the 2014 For the Love of Volleyball Tournament held last Saturday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan sand court.

Mister and Quinn, who teamed up twice for the CNMI and represented the Commonwealth in the 1999 South Pacific Games in Guam and the 2003 edition of the quadrennial event in Fiji, named their squad Happy Birthday and were unbeaten in the



double-elimination play-offs. The pair capped its perfect run in the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association-sanctioned tournament with a 21-14 win in the finals against That's What She Said's Tyler Wisley and Rob Jordan.

See **TESTED** on **Page 26**

Family affair at Meek and Mighty swim

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The 2014 Saipan Swim Club Meek and Might Ocean Swim in the waters off Pacific Islands Club turned out to be a family affair. Father and daughter, father

See **FAMILY** on **Page 26**

Mother and daughter Tina and Milan Goodwin prepare to get out of the water during last Saturday's 2014 SSC Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim at the Pacific Islands Club.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Falcons runners attempt to race home and first base, as Rockies pitcher Dai Podziewski picks up a bunt during the top of the second inning of their game in the Major division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

No-hitter lifts Comets I in rout of Comets II

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

C.J. Cabrera threw a no-hitter to power Comets I to a 10-0 win over Comets II in the Major division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball



League last Sunday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

Cabrera pitched five innings and struck out 12 to See **NO-HITTER** on **Page 26**